

Jane Perry.

P O E M S

A N D

E S S A Y S,

BY THE LATE

MISS BOWDLER. *R*

VOL. I.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE GENERAL
HOSPITAL AT BATH.

Vattene in pace alma beata & bella!
Vattene in pace a la superna fede,
E lascia al mondo esempio di tua fede!

ARIOSTO.

B A T H:

PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL;

AND SOLD BY

C. DILLY, POULTRY, J. ROBSON AND T. HOOKHAM, NEW-BOND-
STREET, LONDON; AND N. R. CHEYNE, NEW EDINBURGH.

M DCC LXXXVIII.

P. O. E. M. S.

AND

E. S. A. Y. S.

ESTABLISHED

MISS W. D. L. R.



THE SIXTH EDITION

FORWARDED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE GENERAL
HOSPITAL AT BATH

Volume in paper nine shillings & sixpence

Volume in leather & in boards ten shillings

It may be ordered of the following booksellers

Admission

1850

PRINTED BY E. CANTRELL

AND S. D. S.

Of the University of London, and of the University of Cambridge

Printed by the University of London, and of the University of Cambridge

1850



P R E F A C E.

THE following Poems and Essays were written to relieve the tedious hours of pain and sickness. The Reader who seeks for amusement only, may possibly receive no gratification from the perusal of them; but for such readers they are not intended.

To the humble and pious Christian, who feels the pressure of distress, and seeks in Religion for that support and consolation which nothing else can bestow;

flow; to him is presented an example of patience and resignation which no sufferings could conquer.

He will not find in the following pages the pride of Stoicism, or the cold precepts of unfeeling prosperity. The Author of these Essays felt, with the keenest sensibility, the uncommon misfortune which condemned her for ten years, in the prime of life, to constantly increasing sufferings; but she found, in the principles which are here laid down, such motives of consolation as rendered her superior to all the sorrows of life, and to the lingering tortures of a most painful death.

They

They who were present at that awful scene, can need no other evidence in support of a truth which the reader will find often repeated in these Essays, viz. that “ though Religion cannot prevent
 “ losses and disappointments, pains and
 “ sorrows; yet in the midst of them all,
 “ and when every earthly pleasure fails,
 “ it commands, it instructs, it enables
 “ us to be happy.



C O N T E N T S.

P O E M S.

	Page
Ode to Hope	1
Elegy on the Death of Mr. Garrick	9
A Ballad	15
Subject <i>Love</i> , for the Vase at Batheaston Villa	23
To Miss —, then two Years old	27
Louisa; a Tale	33
Envy; a Fragment	51
On the New Year	59

E S S A Y S.

On Sensibility	75
On the Character of Lætitia	121
On Politeness	153
On the Character of Curio	199
On Fortitude	209

CONTENTS

P O E M S.

Page

1	-	Ode to Hope
9	-	Elegy on the Death of Mr. Garrick
15	-	A Ballad
23	-	Subject Verse, for the Vase at Bathaston Villa
27	-	To Miss ———, then two Years old
33	-	Iconia; a Tale.
51	-	Envy; a Fragment
59	-	On the New Year

F S A Y S.

75	-	On Sensibility
121	-	On the Character of Ixion
123	-	On Politeness
199	-	On the Character of Cupid
203	-	On Fortitude

P O E M S.

O D E

T O

H O P E.

FRIEND to the wretch whose bosom knows no joy!

Parent of bliss beyond the reach of fate!

Celestial HOPE! thou gift divine,

Sweet balm of grief! O still be mine.

When pains torment, and cares annoy,

Thou only canst their force abate,

And gild the gloom which shades this mortal state.

Though oft thy joys are false and vain,

Though anxious doubts attend thy train,

ODE TO HOPE.

Though disappointment mock thy care,
And point the way to fell despair,
Yet still my secret soul shall own thy pow'r
In sorrow's bitterest pang, in pleasure's gayest hour.
For from the date of Reason's birth
That wond'rous pow'r was given,
To soften every grief on earth,
To raise the soul from thoughtless mirth,
And wing its flight to heaven.
Nor pain nor pleasure can its force destroy,
In every varied scene it points to future joy.

II.

Fancy, wave thy airy pinions,
Bid the soft ideas rise,
Spread o'er all thy wide dominions
Vernal sweets and cloudless skies,
And lo! on yonder verdant plain,
A lovely Youthful Train appear,
Their gentle hearts have felt no pain,
Their guiltless bosoms know no fear:

ODE TO HOPE.

3

In each gay scene some new delight they find,
Yet fancy gayer prospects still behind.

Where are the soft delusions fled?

Must wisdom teach the soul to mourn?

Return, ye days of ignorance, return:

Before my eyes your fairy visions spread!

Alas! those visions charm no more,

The pleasing dream of youth is o'er;

Far other thoughts must now the soul employ,

It glows with other hopes, it pants for other joy.

III.

The trumpet sounds to War:

Loud shouts re-echo from the mountain's side,

The din of battle thunders from afar,

The foaming torrent rolls a crimson tide;

The Youthful Warrior's breast with ardour glows,

In thought he triumphs o'er ten thousand foes:

Elate with hope he rushes on,

The battle seems already won,

ODE TO HOPE.

The vanquish'd hosts before him fly,
 His heart exults in fancied victory,
 Nor heeds the flying shaft, nor thinks of danger nigh.

Methinks I see him now—

Fall'n his crest—his glory gone—
 The opening laurel faded on his brow—
 Silent the trump of his aspiring fame!
 No future age shall hear his name,
 But darkness spread around her sable gloom,
 And deep oblivion rest upon his tomb.

IV.

Through seas unknown, to distant lands,
 In quest of gain the bold Advent'rer goes,
 Fearless roves o'er Afric's sands,
 India's heats, or Zembla's snows:
 Each rising day his dang'rous toil renews;
 But toils and dangers check his course in vain:
 Cheer'd by HOPE, he still pursues
 Fancy'd good through real pain,
 Still in thought enjoys the prize,

ODE TO HOPE.

5

And future happy days in long succession rise:
Yet all his bliss a moment may destroy,
Frail are his brightest hopes, uncertain all his joy.

V.

Hark! the sprightly voice of Pleasure
Calls to yonder rosy bow'r,
There she scatters all her treasure,
There exerts her magic power.
Listen to the pleasing call,
Follow, Mortals, follow all;
Lead the dance, and spread the feast,
Crown with roses every guest:
Now the sprightly minstrels sound,
Pleasure's voice is heard around,
And Pleasure's sprightly voice the hills and dales resound.
Whence rose that secret sigh?—
What sudden gloom o'erclouds thy cheerful brow?
Say, does not every pleasure wait thee now,
That e'er could charm the ear, or court the eye?—
In vain does Nature lavish all her store;

The conscious spirit still aspires,
Still pursues some new desires,
And every wish obtain'd, it sighs and pants for more.

VI.

Are these, O HOPE! the glories of thy reign?
The airy dreams of Fancy and of Youth!
Must all thy boasted pleasures lead to pain;
Thy joys all vanish at the light of truth?
Must wretched man, led by a meteor fire,
To distant blessings still aspire;
Still with ardour strive to gain
Joys he oft pursues in vain,
Joys which quickly must expire;
And when at length the fatal hour is come,
And death prepares th' irrevocable doom,
Mourn all his darling hopes at once destroy'd,
And sigh to leave that bliss he ne'er enjoy'd?

VII.

Rise, heavenly visions! rise,
And every vain delusive fear controul;

ODE TO HOPE.

7

Let real glory charm my wond'ring eyes,
And real happiness enchant my soul!—
Hail glorious dawn of everlasting day!
Though faintly seen at distance here,
Thy beams the sinking heart can cheer,
And light the weary pilgrim on his way:
For not in vain did Heaven inspire
That active spark of sacred fire,
Which still with restless ardour glows:
In pain, in pleasure, still the same,
It seeks that heaven from whence it came,
And scorns all meaner joys, all transient woes.
The soul, for perfect bliss design'd,
Strives in vain that bliss to find,
'Till, wing'd by HOPE, at length it flies
Beyond the narrow bounds of earth, and air, and skies.

VIII.

Still unmov'd, let HOPE remain
Fix'd on true substantial joy;
Dangers then shall threat in vain,

Pains torment, or cares annoy :
Then shall ev'ry guiltless pleasure
Smile with charms unknown before,
HOPE, secure in real treasure,
Mourn her blasted joys no more :
Then through each revolving year—
Though earthly glories fade away,
Though youth, and strength, and life itself, decay—
Yet still more bright the prospect shall appear;
Happier still the latest day,
Brightest far the parting ray.
O'er life's last scene celestial beams shall shine,
'Till death at length shall burst the chain,
While songs of triumph sound on high ;
Then shall HOPE her power resign,
Lost in endless extacy,
And never-fading joy in Heaven's full glories reign.





ON THE
D E A T H
O F

Mr. G A R R I C K.

THE last rites were done—the sacred ground
Was clos'd—and *Garrick's* dust to dust return'd;
In life, in death, with general honours crown'd,
A nation own'd his worth—applauded—mourn'd.

For who, like him, could every sense controul,
To *Shakespeare's* self new charms, new force, impart;
Bid unknown horrors shake the firmest soul,
And unknown feelings melt the hardest heart?

Oft when his eye, with more than magic pow'r,
Gave life to thoughts which words could ne'er reveal,
The voice of praise awhile was heard no more,
All gaz'd in silence, and could only feel.

Each thought suspended in a general pause,
All shar'd his passions, and forgot their own—
'Till rous'd at length, in thunders of applause,
Th' accordant dictates of each heart were known.

O lost for ever to our wond'ring view!—
Yet faithful memory shall preserve thy name;
E'en distant times thy honours shall renew,
And *Garrick* still shall share his *Shakespeare's* fame.

Thus musing, through the lonely aisle I stray'd,
Recall'd the wonders of his matchless pow'rs,
And many a former scene in thought survey'd,
While all unheeded pass'd the silent hours.

With mournful awe I trod the sacred stones,
Where kings and heroes sleep in long repose,
And trophies, mould'ring o'er the warrior's bones,
Proclaim how frail the life which fame bestows.

Now sunk the last faint beam of closing day,
Each form was lost, and hush'd was ev'ry sound;
All, all was silent as the sleeping clay,
And darkness spread her sable veil around.

At once, methought, a more than midnight gloom
With deathlike horror chill'd my throbbing breast,
When lo! a voice, deep murmuring from the tomb,
These awful accents on my soul imprest:—

“ Vain are the glories of a nation's praise;
“ The boast of wit, the pride of genius, vain:
“ A long, long night succeeds the transient blaze,
“ Where darkness, solitude, and silence, reign.

ON THE DEATH OF

" The shouts of loud applause which thousands gave,

" On me nor pride, nor pleasure, now bestow ;

" Like the chill blast that murmurs o'er my grave,

" They pass away—nor reach the dust below.

" One virtuous deed, to all the world unknown,

" Outweighs the highest bliss which these can give,

" Can cheer the soul when youth and strength are flown,

" In sickness triumph, and in death survive.

" What though to thee, in life's remotest sphere,

" Nor nature's gifts, nor fortune's, are consign'd,

" Let brightest prospects to thy soul appear,

" And hopes immortal elevate thy mind.

" The sculptur'd marble shall dissolve in dust,

" And fame, and wealth, and honours, pass away :

" Not such the triumphs of the good and just,

" Not such the glories of eternal day.

“ These, these shall live, when ages are no more,

“ With never-fading lustre still shall shine :——

“ Go then, to Heaven devote thy utmost pow’r,

“ And know—whoe’er thou art—the prize is thine.”



THE

OF THE

THE

THE

THE

8

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE



A

B A L L A D.

[This little Poem was occasioned by the following fact:—A post-boy was apprehended on suspicion of stealing a bank-note from a letter, which the author, at the request of a friend, had conveyed to the post-office. This circumstance obliged her to appear as an evidence against the unfortunate young man, where she was witness to the distress of his aged parents, who were waiting at the door of the Hall, to learn the event of a trial which was to decide on the life of an only son. The innocence of his intentions appearing very evident, the youth was acquitted.]

“RETURN, return, my hapless spouse,

“ Nor seek the fatal place,

“ Where thoughtless crowds expecting stand

“ To see thy child's disgrace.

“Methinks I see the judges set,

“The council all attend,

“And JEMMY trembling at the bar,

“Bereft of every friend.

“How shall a mother’s eye sustain

“The dreadful sight to see!——

“Return, return, my hapless spouse,

“And leave the task to me.”

“Persuade me not, my faithful love,

“Persuade me not to go,

“But let me see my JEMMY’s face,

“And share in all his woe.

“I’ll kneel before his judge’s feet,

“And prayers and tears employ—

“For pity take my wretched life,

“But spare my darling boy.

‘ When trembling, prostrate in the dust,

‘ My heartfelt sorrows flow,

‘ Sure, sure the hardest heart will melt

‘ To see a mother’s woe.

‘ How did I watch his infant years,

‘ Through fond affection blind,

‘ And hop’d the comfort of my age

‘ In JEMMY’s love to find!

‘ Oft when he join’d the youthful train,

‘ And ro~~v~~’d the woods among,

‘ Full many a wishful look I sent,

‘ And thought he staid too long.

‘ And when at length I saw my boy

‘ Come bounding o’er the plain,

(‘ The sprightliest of the sprightly throng,

‘ The foremost of the train)

‘ How have I gaz’d with fond delight,

‘ His harmless joy to see,

‘ As home he brought a load of flow’rs,

‘ And chose the best for me.

‘ Why would’st thou seek the noisy town,

‘ Where fraud and cunning dwell?—

‘ Alas! the heart that knows no guile

‘ Should choose the humble cell.

‘ So might I still with eager joy

‘ Expect my child’s return;

‘ And not, as now, his hapless fate

‘ In bitter sorrow mourn.

‘ Last night when all was dark and still,

(‘ O wond’rous tale to tale!)

‘ I heard a mournful solemn sound—

‘ Methought ’twas JEMMY’S knell.

- ‘ And oft amidst the dreary gloom
‘ I heard a dismal groan—
‘ And oft I felt a clay-cold hand,
‘ Which fondly press’d my own.

‘ Anon I heard the sound confus’d
‘ Of all the rustick train,
‘ And JEMMY’S fainting, trembling voice
‘ For pity begg’d in vain.

‘ Methought I saw the fatal cord,
‘ I saw him dragg’d along—
‘ I saw him seiz’d’——She could no more,
‘ For anguish stopp’d her tongue.

Her faithful partner gently strove
Her sinking heart to cheer,
Yet while his lips of comfort spoke,
He could not hide a tear.

A BALLAD.

But now the voice of joy or woe
To her alike was vain;
Her thought still dwelt on JEMMY's fate,
Her lips on JEMMY's name.

Thus on the mournful pair advanc'd,
And reach'd the fatal place,
Where thoughtless crowds were gather'd round
To see their child's disgrace:——

Such crouds as run with idle gaze
Alike to every shew,
Nor heed a wretched father's tears,
Nor feel a mother's woe.——

Sudden she stopp'd—for now in view
The crouded hall appear'd—
Chill horror seiz'd her stiffen'd frame,
Her voice no more was heard.

She could not move, she could not weep,
Her hands were clasp'd on high;
And all her soul in eager gaze
Seem'd starting from her eye.

For her the husband trembled now
With tender anxious fear;
"O LUCY! turn and speak to me:"
But LUCY could not hear.

Still fix'd she stood in silent woe,
Still gazing on the door;
When lo! a murmur through the croud
Proclaim'd the trial o'er.

At once the blood forsook her cheek,
Her feeble spirits fled;
When JEMMY flew into her arms,
And rais'd her drooping head.

The well-known voice recall'd her soul,

She clasp'd him to her breast:——

O joy too vast for words to tell!

Let Fancy paint the rest.





S U B J E C T

L O V E.

For the VASE at BATH-EASTON VILLA.

WITH bow unstrung, and arrows broke,
Young CUPID to his mother ran,
And tears fast flowing as he spoke,
He thus his sad complaint began:—

“ Ah! where is now that boasted pow’r

“ Which kings and heroes once confess’d?

“ I try my arrows o’er and o’er,

“ But find they cannot reach the breast.

" I seek the rooms, the play, the ball,

" Where Beauty spreads her brightest charms ;

" But lost in crowds my arrows fall,

" And Pleasure flights my feeble arms.

" Yet real pleasure is not there,

" A phantom still deludes their aim ;

" In Dissipation's careless air

" They seek her charms, but seek in vain.

" Here Pride essays my darts to throw,

" But from her hand they ne'er can harm,

" For still she turns aside the blow ;

" Not Beauty's self with Pride can charm.

" Coquetry here with roving eyes

" Quick darts a thousand arrows round ;

" She thinks to conquer by surprize—

" But ah ! those arrows never wound.

“ Here Cunning boasts to guide their course

“ With cautious aim and sly design ;

“ But still she checks their native force—

“ Touch’d by her hand, they drop from mine.

“ Here Affectation taints the smile,

“ Which else had darted Love around :

“ The charms of Art can ne’er beguile :

“ But where shall Nature’s charms be found ?

“ While these their various arts essay,

“ And vainly strive to gain the heart,

“ Good-Sense disdainful turns away,

“ And Reason scorns my pointless dart.

“ Yet they to Love were once ally’d,

“ For Love could ev’ry joy dispense ;

“ Sweet Pleasure smil’d by Virtue’s side,

“ And Love was pair’d with Innocence.”

Fair VENUS clasp'd her darling child,
And gently sooth'd his anxious breast:
'Resume thy darts,' she said, and smil'd,
'Thy wrongs shall quickly be redress'd.

'With artless blush and gentle mien,
'With charms unknowing pride or care,
'With all the graces in her train,
'My lovely * ANNA shall appear.

'Go then, my boy, to earth again,
'Once more assume despotic pow'r;
'For Modesty with her shall reign,
'And Sense and Reason shall adore.'

[* Miss Anne M---LL, now Mrs. D---N.





To MISS —,

THEN TWO YEARS OLD.

SWEET blossom, opening to the beams of day!

Dear object of affection's tender care!

For whom she gently smooths the painful way,

Inspires the anxious wish, the ardent pray'r!

How pleasing in thy infant mind to trace

The dawn of reason's force, of fancy's fire,

The soft impression of each future grace,

And all a parent's warmest hopes desire!

How sweet that smile, unknown to ev'ry art,
Inspir'd by innocence, and peace, and joy !
How pure the transports of thy guiltless heart,
Which yet no fears alarm, no cares annoy !

No airy phantoms of uncertain woe,
The blessings of the present hour allay ;
No empty hopes a fancied good bestow,
Then leave the soul to real grief a prey.

Gay pleasure sparkles in thy gentle eye,
Some new delight in every scene appears ;
Yet soft affection heaves a secret sigh,
And sends an anxious look to distant years.

While those dear smiles with tender love I view,
And o'er thy infant charms enraptur'd bend,
Does my fond hope a real good pursue?
And do these arms embrace a future friend ?

Should heaven to me a lengthen'd date assign,
 Will e'er that love thy gentle heart engage
 With friendship's purest flame to answer mine,
 And charm the languor of declining age?

Yet not for me these ardent wishes rise;
 Beyond the limits of my fleeting years,
 For thee, dear babe, my prayers ascend the skies,
 And pleasing hope my anxious bosom cheers.

May innocence still guard thy artless youth,
 Ere vice and folly's snares thy breast alarm,
 While sweetness, modesty, and spotless truth,
 Beam from thy soul, and brighten ev'ry charm!

May Heaven to thee its choicest gifts impart,
 Beyond what wealth bestows, or pride pursues;
 With ev'ry virtue animate thy heart,
 And raise thy efforts to the noblest views.

In transport wrapt may each fond parent see

Thro' rising years those virtues still improve,

While every tender care now felt for thee,

Thy heart repays with never-ceasing love.

When pleasure smiles, and strews thy path with flow'rs,

And youthful fancy doubles every joy,

May brighter hopes attend thy gayest hours,

And point to bliss which time can ne'er destroy!

And when the pangs of woe thy breast must tear,

When pleasure fades, and fancy charms no more,

Still may those hopes the gloomy prospect cheer,

Unmov'd by grief, unchang'd by fortune's pow'r.

May love, esteem, and friendship, crown thy days,

With joys to guilt unknown, from doubt secure,

While heavenly truth inspires the voice of praise,

And bids that praise beyond the world endure!

THEN TWO YEARS OLD.

31

Through life to virtue's sacred dictates true,
Be such thy joys as angels must approve,
Such as may lead to raptures ever new,
To endless peace, and purest bliss above.



THEN TWO YEARS OLD.

Through the long night of sleep
He came the first to light
Such as may lead to light and love
To earth's peace and earth's joy above.



L O U I S A.

A T A L E.

“ O LEND your wings, ye fav’ring gales,

“ And gently wave the sea,

“ And swell my husband’s spreading fails,

“ And waft him home to me!

“ His toils and dangers all are past,

“ And, blest with fortune’s store,

“ From distant climes he comes at last

“ To view his native shore.

VOL. I.

D

“ And with him comes the faithful youth,

“ Who gain’d my daughter’s love;

“ Whose virtue, constancy, and truth,

“ The coldest heart might move.

“ May all the graces wait around,

“ And heighten all her charms!——

“ He comes, with wealth and glory crown’d,

“ To my LOUISA’S arms.

“ Now Fancy flies to distant days,

“ And views the lovely pair,

“ And hears the voice of general praise

“ Their matchless worth declare.

“ How shall thy mother’s heart expand

“ With joys unknown before,

“ When thousands bless the bounteous hand

“ That gave thee wealth and pow’r!

"Do I not see a distant sail

"O'er yonder waves appear?—

"Our ardent vows at length prevail,

"My heart proclaims them near.

"With us in every joy to share,

"Our much-lov'd heroes come—

"Propitious Heav'n! O hear our pray'r,

"And guide them safely home!"

'Propitious Heaven, O hear our pray'r!

LOUISA trembling cry'd,

For ah! the chill blast wav'd her hair,

The rising cloud she spy'd.

Near and more near the tempest drew,

The clouds obscur'd the sky,

The winds in hoarser murmurs blew,

The waves were toss'd on high:

And now they dash against the shore,
And shake the solid ground ;
The thunder rolls, the torrents roar,
The lightnings flash around.—

Ah! who can paint LOUISA's fear,
Her agonies impart?—
The shrieks of death assail her ear,
And horror chills her heart.

At length, the raging tempest o'er,
She view'd the fatal coast ;
A wreck appear'd upon the shore—
She sunk—in terror lost.

“ My life! my joy! my only love!”
A voice at distance cries :—
That voice her inmost soul could move,
She starts with wild surprise,

Now o'er the beach with eager haste

She sees her HENRY fly:

No more she feels her terrors past:

'Twas bliss—'twas extacy.

Her aged father too appears,

He press'd her to his heart;

But, as he press'd, his streaming tears

Some secret grief impart.

His much-lov'd wife in transport flies,

In all their joy to share;

Yet views her lord with anxious eyes,

And feels a tender fear.

The fond embrace he oft renews,

And oft, with grief oppress'd,

The fatal wreck again he views,

And smites his trembling breast.

"Lo! there," he cry'd, "the sad remains

"Of my once boasted store,

"For all the fruit of all our pains

"Is sunk—to rise no more.

"Yet should this breast ne'er have a groan

"For all my fruitless care:

"Did sorrow seize on me alone,

"My woes I well could bear:

"But ah! for thee my heart must grieve,

"For thee I priz'd my gain:—

"And did I then my child deceive

"With hopes believ'd in vain?

"Still to our humble home confin'd,

"Must rural tasks employ

"A nymph to shine in courts design'd,

"And brighten ev'ry joy.

"In thought, by pleasing hope inspir'd,

"I saw my child appear,

"By all lov'd, by all admir'd,

"The fairest of the fair.

"I saw her rais'd to pomp and state,

"And, rich in fortune's store,

"I heard the praises of the great,

"The blessings of the poor.

"With fond delight my bosom glow'd,

"By soothing fancy led,

"And Heaven the wish'd success bestow'd:—

"But ah! the dream is fled.

"And thou, dear partner of each care,

"This anxious heart has known;

"Thou too, with me, hast felt thy share

"Of hopes—for ever gone.

"Thy thoughts, like mine, in time to come,

"A scene of bliss enjoy'd,

"Till one sad moment's fatal doom

"The airy good destroy'd.

"And thou with me our loss must mourn,

"Thy tears with mine descend;

"And thus, alas! my wish'd return

"Our transient joy must end."

While thus with agonizing sighs

They view'd the fatal place,

LOUISA's mild, yet stedfast eyes

Were fix'd on HENRY's face.

By her own heart, his heart she knew,

She read his virtues there:

Ah! blest indeed the chosen few

Who thus each thought can share!

Serene and firm their joys shall prove,
And every change endure,
No mean suspicion taint their love,
In just esteem secure.

And now her soul with transport glows,
And animates each grace,
A smile, beyond what pleasure knows,
Adorns her lovely face.

‘ And is it thus, my friends, she cry’d,
‘ When every storm is past,
‘ When all our fears at once subside,
‘ Thus do we meet at last?

‘ O lift with me your hearts to Heaven
‘ In strains of ardent praise,
‘ With transport own the blessings giv’n,
‘ To crown our future days.

‘ How oft my fervent pray’rs arose,

‘ While terrors shook my soul,

‘ To HIM who could the storm compose,

‘ And winds and waves controul!

‘ My prayers are heard—my fears are gone,

‘ My much-lov’d friends I see,

‘ I feel a joy till now unknown,—

‘ And can ye grieve for me?

‘ Content I shar’d an humble fate,

‘ Nor wish’d in courts to shine;—

‘ The airy dream which pleas’d of late

‘ With joy I now resign.

‘ What though no scenes of gay delight

‘ Amuse each idle guest,

‘ Nor costly luxuries invite

‘ To share the splendid feast!

‘ Yet Peace and Innocence shall smile,

‘ And purer joys afford,

‘ And Love, secure from doubt or guile,

‘ Shall bless our humble board.

‘ What though we boast nor wealth, nor pow’r,

‘ Each sorrow to relieve,

‘ A little, from our little store,

‘ The poor shall yet receive:

‘ And words of peace shall soothe the woe

‘ Which riches could not heal,

‘ And sweet Benevolence bestow

‘ An aid which all must feel.

‘ Beyond the reach of fortune’s pow’r

‘ Her gentle force extends,

‘ She cheers affliction’s darkest hour,

‘ And joy her steps attends.

‘ Though here to narrow bounds confin’d,

‘ Ordain’d to lowly views,

‘ For ever free, the virtuous mind

‘ Her glorious path pursues ;

‘ In prosp’rous state, o’er all she show’rs

‘ The various blessings given ;

‘ In humble life, exerts her pow’rs,

‘ And trusts the rest to Heav’n.

‘ The lofty dwellings of the great

‘ Full many a wretch contain,

‘ Who feels the cares of pomp and state,

‘ But seeks their joys in vain :

‘ Yet starting from his short repose,

‘ Alarm’d at ev’ry blast,

‘ With anxious fear he dreads to lose

‘ That good he ne’er could taste.

‘ And oft beneath the silent shade

‘ A noble heart remains,

‘ Where Heaven’s bright image is display’d,

‘ And ev’ry virtue reigns.

‘ Sweet peace and joy that heart shall find,

‘ Unmov’d by grief or pain:——

‘ Be such the lot to us assign’d,

‘ And fortune’s frowns are vain.——

‘ O ye, who taught me first to know

‘ Bright Virtue’s sacred flame,

‘ To whom far more than life I owe,

‘ Who more than duty claim;

‘ Ah! let me dry each tender tear,

‘ And ev’ry doubt destroy,

‘ Dispel at once each anxious fear,

‘ And call you back to joy.

‘ And thou, my HENRY! dearer far
‘ Than fortune’s richest prize,
‘ I know thy heart—and thou canst dare
‘ Her treasures to despise:

‘ A purer bliss that heart shall prove,
‘ From care and sorrow free,
‘ Content with innocence and love,
‘ With poverty and me.’ —

In transport lost, and freed from fears,
The happy parents smil’d,
And blushing dry’d the falling tears,
And clasp’d their matchless child.

Her HENRY, fix’d in silent gaze,
Beheld his lovely bride:
“ O Heav’n! accept my humble praise,”
At length entranc’d he cry’d.

“ To all my storms and dangers past,

“ If joys like these succeed,

“ My utmost wish is crown'd at last,

“ And I am rich indeed.

“ Then rise, ye raging tempests! rise,

“ And fortune's gifts destroy;—

“ Thy HENRY gains the noblest prize,

“ He feels the purest joy.

“ Extatic bliss his heart shall prove,

“ From care and sorrow free,

“ While blest with Innocence and Love,

“ With boundless wealth—in thee.

“ Sweet Hope o'er every morn shall shed

“ Her soul-enliv'ning ray;

“ Celestial Peace, by virtue led,

“ Shall cheer each closing day.

“ Far from ambition’s train remov’d,
“ And pleasure’s giddy throng,
“ Our blameless hours, by Heaven approv’d,
“ Shall gently glide along.

“ O may I catch that sacred fire
“ Which animates thy breast ;
“ Like thee to noblest heights aspire,
“ Like thee be truly blest !

“ Thus shall the pleasing charm of love
“ Bright virtue’s force increase—
“ Thus every changing scene shall prove
“ The road to lasting peace.

“ And thus, thro’ life, our hearts shall know
“ A more than mortal joy,
“ Beyond what fortune can bestow,
“ Or time, or death, destroy.”



ENVY, A FRAGMENT.

ARGUMENT.

ENVY, her character; her dwelling near the road that leads to the Temple of VIRTUE. A fruit tree gives shelter and refreshment to travellers; she tears all the buds to prevent it, &c. A lamb takes shelter from the snow in her but; she tears down the roof that it may not protect him, and leaves it so that none may ever find shelter there. Disturbs all travellers. Schemes laid to defeat her. Nothing will do but the shield of TRUTH, which is so bright that none dare carry it, because they cannot themselves stand it. At last INNOCENCE, attended by MODESTY, undertakes it. ENVY attacks them with fury, and throws a dart, which, instead of hurting, only strikes off the veil which hid the face of MODESTY, and makes all the world admire her. ENVY blushes for the first time. INNOCENCE holds up the shield. ENVY is dazzled, and becomes almost blind; she flies from them, and wanders about the world, trying to hurt every body, but being too blind to direct her darts, though they sometimes do harm, yet they always recoil upon herself, and give her the severest wounds.

THE END OF THE WORLD

The first of these is the fact that the
 second of these is the fact that the
 third of these is the fact that the
 fourth of these is the fact that the
 fifth of these is the fact that the
 sixth of these is the fact that the
 seventh of these is the fact that the
 eighth of these is the fact that the
 ninth of these is the fact that the
 tenth of these is the fact that the



E N V Y,

A F R A G M E N T.

I,

YE pleasing dreams of heavenly Poesy,
Which oft have sooth'd my throbbing heart to rest,
And in soft strains of sweetest minstrelsy
Have lull'd the tumults of this anxious breast,
Or charm'd my soul with pleasures unpossess'd:
How sweet with you to wander all the day
In airy scenes, by Fancy's pencil dress'd,
To trace the windings of her devious way,
To feel her magic force, and own her boundless sway.

E 2

II.

See at her call the awful forms arise
Of ancient heroes, moulder'd in the tomb;
Again Vice trembles through her deep disguise,
And Virtue triumphs in a dungeon's gloom,
Or smiles undaunted at a tyrant's doom.
Again she waves on high her magic wand——
The faded glories rise of Greece and Rome,
The heavenly Muses lead a tuneful band,
And Freedom's fearless sons unnumber'd hosts withstand

III.

And now to softer scenes my steps she leads,
The sweet retreats of Innocence and Love,
Where freshest flow'rets deck th' enamell'd meads,
And Nature's music warbles through the grove;
'Mongst rocks and caverns now she loves to rove,
And mark the torrents tumbling from on high,
And now she soars on daring wings, above
The vast expanse of yon ethereal sky,
Or darts through distant time, and long futurity.

IV.

And oft, when weary nature sinks oppress'd
Beneath the load of sickness and of pain,
When sweetest music cannot lull to rest,
And present pleasure spreads her charms in vain,
Bright Fancy comes, and bursts the mental chain,
And bears the soul on airy wings away;
Well pleas'd it wanders o'er her golden reign,
Enjoys the transports of some distant day,
And Pain's suspended force a moment owns her sway.

V.

Ev'n in the loneliest wild, the deepest shade,
Remote from ev'ry pleasing, social scene,
New wonders rise, by Fancy's pow'r display'd:
She paints each heavenly grace with gentle mein,
Celestial Truth, and Innocence serene,
And Hope, exulting still in future joy,
Though dangers threat and tempests intervene;
And Patience, ever calm, though cares annoy,
And sweet Benevolence, whose pleasures ne'er can cloy.

VI.

In dangers firm, in triumphs ever mild,
 The awful form of Fortitude appears;
 Pure Joy, of heavenly Piety the child,
 Serenely smiles, unmov'd by grief or fears;
 Soft Mercy dries affliction's bitter tears,
 Still blest in ev'ry blessing she bestows;
 While Friendship's gentle voice each sorrow cheers:
 Sweet are her joys, and pleasing e'en her woes,
 When warm'd by Virtue's fire the sacred ardour glows.

VII.

Thus Fancy's pow'r in solitude can charm,
 Can rouse each latent virtue in the heart,
 Preserve the heavenly spark for ever warm,
 And guiltless pleasures ev'ry hour impart.
 Yet oh! beware—lest Vice with fatal art
 Should taint the gift for Virtue's aid design'd;
 Lest Fancy's sting should point affliction's dart,
 Or empty shadows check th' aspiring mind,
 By vain delights subdu'd, or vainer fears confin'd.

VIII.

For oft when Virtue prompts the gen'rous deed,
 And points the way to gain the glorious prize,
 Imagin'd ills her upward flight impede,
 And all around fantastic terrors rise;
 Ev'n Vice itself can Fancy's pow'r disguise
 With borrow'd charms, enchanting to betray:—
 Oh! then let Reason watch with cautious eyes,
 Secure its active force in Virtue's way,
 Then slack the rein at will, and free let Fancy stray.

IX.

Thus musing late at evening's silent hour,
 My wand'ring footsteps sought the lonely shade;
 And gently led by Fancy's magic pow'r,
 Methought at once, to distant realms convey'd,
 New scenes appear'd, by mortal ne'er survey'd;
 Such as were fabled erst in fairy land,
 Where elfin Knights their prowess oft display'd,
 And mighty Love inspir'd the warlike band
 To seek adventures hard at Beauty's high command,

X.

Full many a path there was on ev'ry side,
These waste and wild, and those beset with flow'rs;
Where many a pilgrim wander'd far and wide,
Some bent to seek gay Pleasure's rosy bow'rs,
And some to gain Ambition's lofty tow'rs:
While others view their labours with disdain,
And prize alone the gifts which Fortune show'rs;
With careless steps some wander o'er the plain,
And some with ardour strive bright Virtue's hill to gain.

XI.

But many foes in ev'ry path were seen,
Who strove by ev'ry art to stop the way:
Here Indolence appear'd with vacant mein,
And painted forms of terror and dismay;
And there the Passions rose in dread array,
And fill'd with clouds and darkness all the air;
While empty fears and hopes alike betray,
And Pride, with Folly join'd, destructive pair!
Drew many from each path, then left them to despair.

XII.

Yet still distinguish'd o'er the hostile band,
By all detested, and to all a foe,
Pale ENVY rose: while, trembling in her hand,
Her poison'd shaft still aim'd some deadly blow,
Her eyes still wander'd in pursuit of woe:
For her, in vain rises the cheerful morn,
In vain the flow'rs with freshest lustre glow,
Vain all the charms which Nature's face adorn:
They cannot cheer a heart with ceaseless anguish torn.

XIII.

Beside the way that leads to Virtue's shrine,
This wicked hag her fav'rite dwelling chose,
Around her walls did baneful nightshade twine,
And twisted thorns did all her hut compose;
And still from morning's dawn to ev'ning's close,
Some horrid purpose would her thoughts employ;
For never could her heart enjoy repose,
Nor e'er her restless spirit taste of joy,
Save when her cruel arts could others' peace destroy.

XIV.

The sprightly voice of guiltless Pleasure's train,
 The pleasing smile which Peace and Virtue wear,
 Whose gentle force might charm the sense of pain,
 Suspend distress, and smoothe the brow of care,
 Still with new pangs her cruel heart would tear:
 But when she heard Affliction's bitter cries,
 Or view'd the horrid form of dark Despair,
 A transient gladness lighten'd in her eyes—
 But transient still and vain are Envy's wretched joys.





ON THE
NEW YEAR.

TIS past:—another year for ever gone
Proclaims the end of all;—with awful voice
It calls the soul to thought. Awhile she turns
From present scenes, and wanders o'er the past;
Or, darting forward, strives to pierce the veil
Which hides from mortal eyes the time to come.

O Thou, to grateful mem'ry ever dear!
Whom fond affection still delights to name!
Whom still my heart exults to call 'My Friend!'

In fancy yet be present.—Oft with Thee
In many a lonely walk and silent shade
My soul holds converse!—oft recalls the hours
When pleas'd attention hung upon thy voice,
While the pure dictates of celestial Truth
In Friendship's gentlest accents charm'd my ear,
And sooth'd each anxious thought, and shew'd the way
Which leads to present peace and future bliss:—
Though now far distant, yet in thought be near,
And share with me reflection's sacred hour.
And oh! to Thee may each revolving year
Its choicest blessings bring! May Heavenly Peace,
To every thoughtless mind unknown—pursued
In vain through scenes of visionary good—
That peace which dwells with piety alone,
Still on thy steps through every stage attend!
And purest joy from Virtue's sacred source,
Blest in the thought of many a well-spent day,
Blest in the prospect of unbounded bliss,
Cheer every hour, and triumph in the last!

As when a traveller, who long has rov'd
Through many a varied path, at length attains
Some eminence, from whence he views the land
Which late he pass'd—groves, streams, and lawns appear,
And hills with flocks adorn'd, and lofty woods;
And ev'ry charm which Nature's hand bestows
In rich profusion decks the smiling scene—
No more he views the rugged thorny way,
The steep ascent, the slippery path, which led
High o'er the brink of some rude precipice;
Unnumber'd beauties, scarce observ'd before,
At once combine to charm his raptur'd view,
And backward turning, oft in transport lost,
His toils and dangers past no more are felt,
But long and tedious seems the road to come:—
Thus oft, when youth is fled, when health decays,
And cares perplex, and trifling pleasures cloy;
Sick of vain hopes, and tir'd of present scenes,
The soul returns to joys she feels no more,
And backward casts her view. Then Fancy comes

In Memory's form, and gilds the long-past days,
 Recalls the faded images of joy,
 Paints every happy moment happier still;
 But hides each anxious fear, and heartfelt pang,
 Each pleasure lost, and hope pursued in vain,
 Which oft o'erspread with gloom the gayest hour,
 And taught ev'n Youth and Innocence to mourn.

O Happiness, in every varied scene,
 Thro' toil, thro' danger, and thro' pain pursued!
 Yet oft when present scarce enjoy'd;—when past,
 Recall'd to wound the heart, to blast the sweets
 Yet given to life:—How are thy votaries,
 Misled by vain delusions, thus deceiv'd!
 Let rising Hope, for ever on the wing,
 Still point to distant good, to perfect bliss;
 While conscious of superior pow'rs, the soul
 Exulting hears her call, and longs to soar
 To scenes of real and unfading joy.
 Yet while on earth some feeble rays are shed

To cheer the mournful gloom, O let not man
Reject the proffer'd gift!—with innocence
And gratitude enjoy'd, each present good
Beyond the fleeting moment may extend
Its pleasing force.—When Nature's varied charms,
In all the gayest lustre of the spring,
Delight the wond'ring view!—while every grove
With artless music hails the rising morn,
The sportive lambkins play, the shepherd sings,
Creation smiles, and every bosom feels
The general joy;—O say, from scenes like these
Shall not the sweet impressions still remain
Of Innocence and Peace, and social Love,
To bless the future hour?—When the glad heart
Exulting beats at Friendship's sacred call,
And feels what language never can express;
While every joy exalted and refin'd,
And each tumultuous passion charm'd to peace,
Own the sweet influence of its matchless power;
(That power which ev'n o'er grief itself can shed

A heavenly beam, when pleasure courts in vain,
And wealth and honours pass unheeded by :)
Shall joys like these, on Virtue's basis rais'd,
Like Fancy's vain delusions pass away?
O no!—Nor time, nor absence, shall efface
The ever dear remembrance;—ev'n when past,
When deep affliction mourns the blessing gone,
Yet shall that blessing be for ever priz'd,
For ever felt.—When heaven-born Charity
Expands the heart, and prompts the liberal hand
To soothe distress, supply the various wants
Of friendless poverty, and dry the tears
Which bathe the widow's cheek, whose dearest hope
Is snatch'd away, and helpless orphans ask
That aid she cannot give;—Say, shall the joy
(Pure as the sacred source from whence it springs)
Which then exalts the soul, shall *this* expire?—
The grass shall wither, and the flower shall fade,
But Heaven's eternal Word shall still remain,
And Heaven's eternal Word pronounc'd it blest.

Ye calm delights of Innocence and Peace!
Ye joys by Virtue taught, by Heaven approv'd!
Is there a heart, which lost in selfish views
Ne'er felt your pleasing force, ne'er knew to share
Another's joy, or heave a tender sigh
For sorrows not its own;—which all around
Beholds a dreary void, where Hope perhaps
May dart a feeble ray, but knows not where
To point its aim? (For real good, unknown
While present, is pursued, but ne'er attain'd.)
Is there a heart like this? At such a sight,
Let soft Compassion drop a silent tear,
And Charity reluctant turn away
From woes she ne'er shall feel, nor can relieve.
But oh! let those whom Heaven has taught to feel
The purest joys which mortals e'er can know,
With gratitude recall the blessings given,
Though grief succeed; nor e'er with envy view
That calm which cold indifference seems to share,
And think those happy who can never lose

That good they never knew:—for joys like these
Refine, ennoble, elevate the mind;
And never, never shall succeeding woes
Efface the blest impression:—Grief itself
Retains it still; while Hope exulting comes
To snatch them from the power of time and death,
And tell the soul—*They never shall decay.*

When Youth and Pleasure gild the smiling morn,
And Fancy scatters roses all around,
What blissful visions rise! In prospect bright
Awhile they charm the soul: but scarce attain'd,
The gay delusion fades.—Another comes,
The soft enchantment is again renew'd,
And Youth again enjoys the airy dreams
Of fancied good.—But ah! how oft ev'n these
By stern Affliction's hand are snatch'd away,
Ere yet experience proves them vain, and shews
That earthly pleasures to a heavenly mind
Are but the shadows of substantial bliss!

But Pleasure rais'd by Virtue's powerful charm,
Above each transient view, each meaner aim,
Can bless the present hour, and lead the soul
To brighter prospects, rich in every good
Which man can feel, or Heaven itself bestow.

While thus returning o'er the long-past scenes
Of former life, the mind recalls to view
The strange vicissitudes of grief and joy,
O may the grateful heart for ever own
The various blessings given! nor dare repine
At ills which all must share; or deem those ills
From Chance or Fate (those empty names which veil
The ignorance of man) could ever flow;
But warn'd alike by Pleasure and by Pain,
That higher joys await the virtuous mind
Than aught on earth can yield: in every change
Adore that Power which rules the whole, and gives,
In Pleasure's charms, in Sorrow's keenest pangs,
The means of good, the hope—the pledge of bliss.

Thou rising year, now opening to my view,
Yet wrapp'd in darkness—whither dost thou lead?
What is Futurity?—It is a time
When joys, unknown to former life, *may* shed
Their brightest beams on each succeeding day;
When Health again *may* bloom, and Pleasure smile,
(By Pain no more allay'd) and new delights
On every changing season still attend;
Each morn returning wake the soul to joy
From balmy slumbers, undisturb'd by care;
Success still wait on Hope; and every hour
In peace and pleasure gently glide away.—
But ah! how rare on earth are years like this!
In the dark prospect of Futurity,
Far other scenes than these may yet remain:
Affliction there may aim her keenest shafts
To tear the heart,—while pain and sickness waste
The feeble frame by slow-consuming pangs,
And ease and comfort lost are sought in vain;
For there, perhaps, no friendly voice may cheer

The tedious hours of grief, but all around
Expiring joys and blasted hopes appear,
New woes succeed to woes, and every good
On earth be snatch'd away.—How then shall man
Salute the rising year?—Shall cheerful Hope
Receive the welcome guest; or Terror wait
In speechless anguish the impending storm?—
Presumptuous mortal, cease:—O turn thine eyes
On the dark mansions of the silent dead,
And check the bold enquiry;—never more
The rising sun may shed its beams on thee;
Perhaps, ev'n now, the fatal hour is come
Which ends at once thy earthly hopes and fears,
And seals thy doom through vast eternity.—
How awful is the thought! and who shall say
It is not just? What mortal shall disclose
The dark decrees of Heaven?—But grant, to life
A longer date assign'd, another year
On earth bestow'd; in deepest shades conceal'd
Its good or ill remains; no mortal hand

Can draw the veil which hides it from thy view.
Hence then, ye airy dreams by fancy led!
Vain hopes, and vainer fears—deceive no more!
In native lustre bright let Truth appear,
With her pure beams illumine the dark unknown,
And shew what man of future days can know.

What is Futurity?—It is a time
By Heaven in mercy giv'n, where all may find
Their best, their truest good,—the means, the power,
To elevate their nature, to exert
Each nobler faculty, and still to rise
In every virtue.—Here the best may find
Improvement: for what mortal e'er attain'd
Perfection's utmost point?—And here ev'n those,
Who long, by vice and folly led astray,
Forsook the paths of wisdom and of truth,
May yet return, and with new ardour seek
That long-neglected good, which, though despis'd,
Rejected once, may here be yet attain'd.—

Know then, whoe'er thou art, on whom high Heaven
Another year of life will now bestow,
That year may lead thee to eternal peace,
May cancel follies past, redeem the time
In thoughtless dissipation once abus'd,
Dispel the shades of vice, the gloom of care,
Call forth each latent virtue, and impart
New strength, new hopes, and joys which ne'er
shall fail.

Then hail, bright prospect of the rising year!
The school of virtue, and the road to bliss!——
No more the shades of doubt are spread around;
No more ideal pleasures deck the scene
With airy forms of good, which Fancy's self
Scarce dares enjoy; no more by terror led
A train of woes in long succession rise,
And deepest horror o'er the time to come
Extends her baleful influence;—by the power
Of Truth subdued, at once they disappear,

And surer hopes, and brighter views arise,
Than Pleasure e'er could give, or Pain destroy,
To chase each vain delusion far away,
And shew the glorious prize which future days
May yet attain.—This, this alone is sure:
The rest, involv'd in dark uncertainty,
But mocks our search:—But oh! how blest the path
(Whate'er it be) which leads to endless rest!—

Then let Affliction come;—shall man complain
Of seeming ills, which Heaven in mercy sends
To check his vain pursuits, exalt his views,
Improve his virtues, and direct the soul
To seek that aid which ne'er can fail, that aid
Which all who seek shall find? Oh! in the hour
Of deepest horror, when the throbbing heart,
Oppress'd with anguish, can sustain no more,
May Patience still, and Resignation, come
To cheer the gloom!—not such as his who boasts
Superior powers, a mind above the reach

Of human weakness, yet with ardour seeks
The frail support of transitory praise;—
Or his, who trembling at an unknown power,
Submits in silence to Omnipotence,
And struggling checks the murmurs of his breast;—
But that sweet Peace, that heartfelt Confidence,
(By heavenly hope and filial love inspir'd,
In Truth's inviolable word secure)
Which pain and sorrow never can destroy;
Which smile triumphant in the gloom of woe,
And own a Father's pow'r, a Father's love
O'er all presiding.—Blest in thoughts like these
The mourner's heart still feels a secret joy,
Which pleasure ne'er could yield:—no murmurs now
Disturb its peace;—but every wish resign'd
To Wisdom, Power, and Goodness infinite,
Celestial hope and comfort beam around
O'er all the prospect of succeeding time,
And never-fading glories close the scene.

O THOU, great source of every good! by whom
This heart was taught to beat, these thoughts to range
O'er the wide circuit of the universe,
To soar beyond the farthest bounds of time,
And pant for bliss which earth could ne'er bestow;—
While worlds unnumber'd tremble at thy power,
And hosts celestial own their loftiest strain
Too weak to tell thy praise;—O how shall man
E'er lift his voice to Thee?—Yet at thy call
Thy servant comes. O hear my humble prayer:—
By thy Almighty power direct, sustain
My feeble efforts; and whate'er the lot
To me on earth assign'd, O guide me still,
By the blest light of thy eternal truth,
Through every varied scene of joy or woe;
Support my weakness by thy mighty aid,
And lead my soul to Peace—to Bliss—to Thee!





ESSAYS.



ON

SENSIBILITY.

IT is a common observation, that in this world we stand more in need of comforts than of pleasures. Pain, sickness, losses, disappointments, sorrows of every kind, are sown so thick in the path of life, that those who have attempted to teach the way to be happy, have in general bestowed more attention on the means of supporting evil, than of seeking

seeking good;—nay, many have gone so far as to recommend Insensibility as the most desirable state of mind, upon a supposition, that evil (or the appearance of evil) so far predominates, that the good, in general, is not sufficient to counterbalance it, and that therefore, by lessening the sense of both, we should be gainers on the whole, and might purchase constant ease, and freedom from all anxiety, by giving up pleasures, which are always uncertain, and often lead to the severest sufferings: and this, taking all circumstances together, it has been thought would be a desirable exchange.

On the same principle much serious advice has been bestowed on the young, the gay, and the happy, to teach them—to be moderate in their pursuits and wishes, that they may avoid the pangs of disappointment in case they
should

should not succeed;—to allay the pleasure they might receive from the enjoyment of every good they possess, by dwelling continually on the thought of its uncertainty;—to check the best affections of their hearts, in order to secure themselves from the pain they may afterwards occasion;—in short, to deprive themselves of the good they might enjoy, from a fear of the evil which may follow:—which is something like advising a man to keep his eyes constantly shut, as the most certain way to avoid the sight of any disagreeable object.

Those on the other hand who are in a state of affliction, are advised to moderate their grief, by considering, that they knew beforehand the uncertainty of every good they possessed;—that nothing has befallen them but what is the common lot of mankind;—
that

that the evil consists chiefly in the opinion they form of it;—that what is independent on themselves, cannot really touch them but by their own fault; and their concern cannot make things better than they are.

Many other considerations of the same kind are added, to which probably no person under the immediate influence of real affliction ever paid the least attention; and which, even if they are allowed their greatest force, could only silence complaints, and lead the mind into a state of insensibility, but could never produce the smallest degree of comfort or of happiness.

In order to determine whether this be really the way to pass through life with the greatest ease and satisfaction, it may not be useless to enquire in what state the mind of man would be,

be, supposing it really to have attained that insensibility, both as to pain and pleasure, which has been represented as so desirable:—

I speak of a mind possessed of its full powers and faculties, and capable of exerting them; for there may be some who, from natural incapacity, or want of education, are really incapable of it, and can drudge on through life with scarce any feelings or apprehensions beyond the present moment:—But if these are supposed to be the happiest of mankind, then the end of the argument will be,

“ In happiness the beast excels the man,

“ The worm excels the beast, the clod the worm.”

And it seems scarce possible to suppose any rational creature (not under the immediate influence of passion) to be really so far convinced of this, as to wish to exchange his situation in the scale of being with the beast or the clod.

If

If then we suppose the mind in full possession of its powers, is it possible to suppose that the way to enjoy happiness, or even peace, is by preventing their exertion? If positive pain and pleasure are taken away, if all the objects proposed to it make no impression, will the mind therefore be at ease? Far from it surely. On the contrary, it will be torn in pieces by wishes which will have no object whereon to fix;—it will feel in itself powers and capacities for happiness: but finding nothing to make it happy, those very powers will make it miserable;—having no motive for action, no object to pursue, every rising day will present a blank, which it will be impossible to fill up with any thing that can give pleasure; and the wish of every morning will be, that the day were past, though there is no prospect that the next will produce any thing more satisfactory.

Could

Could it be possible for any person really to have attained to such a state as this, instead of finding it a state of ease and satisfaction, we should see him weary of himself and all around him, unhappy with nothing to complain of, and without any hope of being ever otherwise, because he would have no determinate wish, in the accomplishment of which he could promise himself any enjoyment.

But, happily for mankind, a state like this is not to be attained by any thinking person; and those who place their notion of happiness in mere freedom from suffering, must be reduced to envy the happiness of the beasts of the field;—for it is not the happiness of man.

Those, indeed, who from a state of excessive suffering are suddenly relieved, and restored to ease of body and mind, may, at the time,

feel more joy from that ease than they would have felt from the greatest positive pleasure; but then that joy will be transient indeed, since it arises only from a comparison of past sufferings, the sense of which is quickly lost; and as soon as the mind returns to its natural state, it feels again the want of that enjoyment for which it was formed, and becomes miserable, not from any positive sufferings, but merely from the want of happiness.

Those who take pleasure in arguments which answer no other purpose than to exercise their ingenuity, may amuse themselves with disputing whether this inextinguishable thirst after happiness be really a desirable gift, and whether it might not have been happier for man, to have been formed without that activity of mind which prompts him continually to seek for some enjoyment. But to those
who

who feel its force, it is surely a more important point to enquire how it may best be satisfied; and whether it may not be possible to regulate those affections which they cannot suppress, and, by directing them to proper objects, to find in them a source of happiness, which, though it can neither prevent sufferings, nor take away the sense of them, may yet be felt at the same time, and serve in a great degree to counterbalance the effect of them.

It must, I believe, be allowed, that every man, who reflects on his own situation, will find that it has its pleasures and its pains,—unmixed happiness or misery not being the lot of this life, but reserved for a future state. The happiness of life must then be estimated by the proportion its joys bear to its sorrows; and if what has been before supposed con-

G 2 cerning

cerning the state of the mind be just, he will not be found to be the happiest man who has the fewest sorrows, but he whose joys overbalance his sorrows in the greatest degree.

This then should be our aim in the pursuit of happiness:—not to conquer the sense of suffering, for that is impossible; not to suppress our desires and hopes, for that (if it were possible) would only debase the mind, not make it happy; but to cultivate every faculty of the soul which may prove a source of innocent delight; to endeavour as far as possible to keep the mind open to a sense of pleasure, instead of sullenly rejecting all, because we cannot enjoy exactly what we wish;—above all, to secure to ourselves a lasting fund of real pleasures, which may compensate those afflictions they cannot prevent, and
make

make us not insensible, but happy in the midst of them.

It is very certain that nothing can fully do this, except Religion, and the glorious prospects it offers to our hopes; this is the only foundation of lasting happiness, the only source of never-failing comfort. While our best affections are fixed on any thing in this world, they must always give us pain, because they will find nothing which can fully satisfy them; but when once they are fixed on Infinite Perfection as their ultimate object, the subordinate exercises of them will furnish many sources of pleasure and advantage, and should be cultivated both with a view to present and future happiness.

It seems strange to observe, that there are few, if any, in the world, who enjoy all the

blessings which are bestowed upon them, and make their situation in life as happy as it might be. Wherever the selfish passions are indulged to excess, this must always be the consequence; for none can be happy while they make others miserable.

Whoever is possessed of any degree of power, from the greatest monarch on the throne to the master of the meanest cottage, must depend for his happiness on those over whom that power is exercised; and, whether he will or no, must share in the sufferings which he inflicts, and feel the want of that satisfaction, which he might have received from a different employment of his power.

The truth of this observation has been experienced by all who ever endeavoured to purchase their own happiness at the expence
of

of that of others. But even where this is not the case, where the intentions are good, and the pleasures of life are not embittered by the sense of guilt, it often happens that disappointments bring on disgust; the pleasures which were expected are not found; and therefore those which might be found, are undervalued;—the mind is dissatisfied, and seeks for reasons to justify itself for being so; and when sorrows are sought for, it is not difficult to find them.

Such a disposition can poison every pleasure, and add numberless imaginary evils to those which must inevitably be met with in the path of life. By degrees the activity of the soul is lost; every sorrow appears insupportable; every difficulty unconquerable; no object is thought worth pursuing; and life itself becomes a burden.

To

To guard against the fatal effects which disappointments are apt to have upon the mind, is a point of the utmost consequence towards passing through life with any tolerable degree of comfort and satisfaction; for disappointments, more or less, must be the lot of all.

At the first entrance into the world, when the imagination is active, the affections warm, and the heart a stranger to deceit, and consequently to suspicion, what delightful dreams of happiness are formed! Whatever may be the object in which that happiness is supposed to consist, that object is pursued with ardour;—the gay and thoughtless seek for it in dissipation and amusement; the ambitious, in power, fame, and honours; the affectionate, in love and friendship;—but how few are there who find in any of these objects that happiness which they expected!

Pleasure,

Pleasure, fame, &c. even when they are in any degree obtained, still leave a void in the soul, which continually reminds the possessor, that this is not the happiness for which he was formed; and even the best affections are liable to numberless disappointments, and often productive of the severest pangs.

The unsuspecting heart forms attachments, before reason is capable of judging whether the objects of them are such as are qualified to make it happy; and it often happens, that the fatal truth is not discovered till the affections are engaged too far to be recalled, and then the disappointment must prove a lasting sorrow.

But it is not necessary to enumerate the disappointments which generally attend on the pursuits of youth; and indeed the prospect is too painful to dwell upon: the intention of
mentioning

mentioning them is only to guard against the effects they may produce.

The imagination has painted an object, which perhaps is not to be found in this world; that object has been pursued in vain: but shall we therefore conclude, that no object is worth pursuing, and sink into a listless, inactive state, in which we must grow weary of ourselves, and all the world?

The young are too apt to fancy that the affections of their hearts will prove the source of nothing but pleasure;—those who are farther advanced in life, are much too apt to run into the contrary extreme. The error of the first, even taking it in the worst light, is productive of some pleasure as well as pain; that of the last serves only to throw a damp over every pleasure, and can be productive of
nothing

nothing but pain. It leads indeed to the most fatal consequences, since it tends to make *self* the only object; and the heart which is merely selfish must ever be incapable of virtue and of happiness, and a stranger to all the joys of affection and benevolence; without which the happiest state in this world must be insipid, and which may prove the source of many pleasures, even in the midst of the severest afflictions.

In every state of life, in spite of every disappointment, *these* should still be cherished and encouraged; for though they may not always bestow such pleasures as the romantic imaginations of youth had painted, yet they will still bestow such as can be found in nothing else in this world; and indeed they are necessary, in order to give a relish to every enjoyment.

I mention

I mention an affectionate and a benevolent disposition together, because I believe, when they are genuine, they never can be separated; and, perhaps, the disappointments so often complained of may sometimes be occasioned by a mistake upon this subject; for there is a selfish attachment, which often usurps the name of friendship, though it is indeed something totally different. It is an attachment like that which a musician feels for his instrument, or a virtuoso for his pictures and his statues;—the affection is not fixed on the object itself, but merely on the pleasure received from it. Such an attachment as this is liable to numberless little jealousies and uneasinesses;—the smallest doubt is sufficient to awaken its fears; the most trifling error excites its resentment, and that resentment is immediately expressed by complaints, and often by upbraidings.

True

True friendship is not indeed less quick-fighted; it watches with a tender and anxious solicitude to promote the welfare and happiness of the object which it loves; it is a kind of microscope which discovers every speck; but then the discovery does not excite anger and resentment, still less could it lead to unkindness and upbraidings;—it inspires a concern like that which we feel for our own errors and imperfections, and produces an earnest desire and sincere endeavour to remove them.

With such a friend, the heart may appear just as it is, and enjoy the pleasure of an unbounded confidence;—but with those whose affection is founded on a regard to themselves, every word and action must be weighed, and the fear of giving offence must throw a restraint over every conversation.

The

The real friend will be disposed to love all those who are any way connected with the object of his affection; he will be sincerely interested for their welfare, and will wish to gain their affection, and promote their happiness.

The selfish will view them with a jealous eye, continually apprehensive that they may rob him of some part of a treasure which he would wish to engross,

It would be easy to carry on the contrast much farther; for indeed it might be shewn in almost every instance. But what has been said may be sufficient to shew how very wide is the difference between that sort of attachment of which a selfish heart is capable, and that which alone deserves the name of real friendship; though it is often too indiscriminately given to both: the one is an enemy

to

to general benevolence; the other flows from the same source, and belongs to the same character.

Such a disposition, it must be allowed, may prove the source of many pleasures; but it may be objected, that it will prove the source of many sorrows also: and indeed, in this imperfect state, this truth is too certain to be disputed. But if it can be proved, that on the whole it affords more joys than sorrows, that will be sufficient to the present purpose; if it be allowed that the happiness of man must consist in positive enjoyment, not in mere freedom from suffering.

And surely much more than this might easily be proved, since it not only can afford pleasures of the most exalted kind, and give new relish to every other pleasure; but even in
the

the midst of the most painful sufferings it ever occasioned, it can at the same time inspire a secret satisfaction, of which those who never felt it can hardly form any idea.

With such a disposition, power and riches may be real blessings; since they furnish frequent opportunities of bestowing happiness, and consequently of enjoying it in the highest degree. But even without these advantages, the truly benevolent, in whatever situation in life they may be placed, will find numberless sources of pleasure and delight, which to others must be for ever unknown. All the happiness they see, becomes in some sort their own: and even, under the pressure of the greatest afflictions, they can rejoice at the good which others enjoy; and far from repining at the comparison, they find in the thought of it a pleasure and satisfaction, to
which

which no suffering of their own can render them insensible; but which, on the contrary, prove a powerful cordial to help them to support those sufferings.

Even the face of inanimate nature fills them with a satisfaction which the insensible can never know, while they are warmed with gratitude to the Giver of every good, and joy at the thought that their fellow-creatures share those blessings with them. They may even experience something like the pleasure of bestowing happiness, while they rejoice in all that is bestowed, and feel in their hearts that they would bestow it if they could.

It is true indeed, that they must share in the sorrows of others, as well as in their joys; but then this may often lead to the heavenly pleasure of relieving them, if not as fully as

they could wish, yet at least in some degree; for true benevolence can discover numberless methods of relieving distress, which would escape the notice of the careless and insensible. When relief is not in their power, some expressions of kindness, and the appearance of a desire to give comfort and assistance, may at least contribute to soothe the wounded mind, and they may still enjoy the pleasure which attends on every endeavour to do good, even on the unsuccessful; and when they are placed beyond the reach of this, and can only offer up a secret prayer for those whose sufferings they cannot alleviate, even this will be attended with a heartfelt satisfaction, more than sufficient to suppress every wish that they could behold the sorrows of others with indifference, if it were possible that such a wish could ever arise in a truly benevolent heart.

Such

Such a disposition will be a powerful preservative against that weariness of mind, which is so often an attendant on what is generally esteemed a happy situation in this world.

Those who are freed from cares and anxieties, who are surrounded by all the means of enjoyment, and whose pleasures present themselves without being sought for, are often unhappy in the midst of all, merely because that activity of mind, in the proper exercise of which our happiness consists, has in them no object on which it may be employed. But when the heart is sincerely and affectionately interested for the good of others, a new scene of action is continually open, every moment may be employed in some pleasing and useful pursuit. New opportunities of doing good are continually presenting themselves; new schemes are formed, and ardently pursued;

fued; and even when they do not succeed, though the disappointment may give pain, yet the pleasure of self-approbation will remain, and the pursuit will be remembered with satisfaction. The next opportunity which offers itself will be readily embraced, and will furnish a fresh supply of pleasures; such pleasures as are secure from that weariness and disgust, which sooner or later are the consequences of all such enjoyments as tend merely to gratify the selfish passions and inclinations, and which always attend on an inactive state of mind, from whatever cause it may proceed; whether it may be the effect of satiety or disappointment, of prosperity or despair.

Even in the most trifling scenes of common life, the truly benevolent may find many pleasures, which would pass unnoticed by others; and in a conversation, which to the
thoughtless

thoughtless and inattentive would afford only a trifling amusement, or perhaps no amusement at all, they may find many subjects for pleasing and useful reflections, which may conduce both to their happiness and advantage; and that not only by being continually upon the watch for every opportunity of doing good to others, even in the most trifling instances, (which alone would afford a constant source of pleasure) but also by the enjoyment of all the good they can observe in others.

If any action is related, or any expression dropped, which indicates true goodness of heart, they will be heard with satisfaction; the most trifling instance of kindness and attention will be received with a sort of pleasure of which the selfish can form no idea. Every appearance or description of innocent happi-

ness will be enjoyed, every expression of real friendship and affection will be felt, even though they are not the objects of it.

In short, all the happiness, and all the virtues of others, are sources of delight to them; and it is a pleasing, as well as useful exercise to the mind, to be employed, when engaged in society, in seeking out for these;—to trace to their spring the little expressions of benevolence which often pass unnoticed;—to discover real merit, through the veil which humility and modesty throw over it;—to admire true greatness of mind, even in the meanest situation in life, or when it exerts itself upon occasions supposed to be trifling, and therefore, in general, but little attended to.

In these, and in numberless instances of the same kind, much real pleasure might be found,
which

which is too generally overlooked, and which might prove the source of many advantages, both to ourselves and others; for those who really enjoy the good of others, will certainly wish and endeavour to promote it. And by such exercises as these, the best affections of the heart are continually called forth to action, and the pleasures which they afford may be enjoyed and improved in every different situation in life; for these are pleasures, which, more or less, are within the reach of all.

In these, the rich and prosperous may find that satisfaction which they have sought in vain in selfish gratifications; and the afflicted may yet enjoy that happiness which they are too apt to imagine is entirely lost:—but the selfish heart can neither enjoy prosperity, nor support affliction; it will be weary and dissatisfied

satisfied in the first, and totally dejected in the last.

In order to administer consolation to the afflicted, the usual methods are, either to endeavour to lessen their sense of the evil, by shewing them that it is not really so great as they imagine; or by comparing it with greater evils endured by others; or else to drive it from the thought by the hurry of dissipation and amusement.

The first of these methods may serve to display the talents of the person who undertakes it; and perhaps such arguments may sometimes prevail upon vanity to assume an appearance of fortitude. But how can he, whose heart feels the pangs of real affliction, be convinced by argument that he does not feel it? or what relief can it give to his sufferings,

ferings, to be told that another suffers more? Nor can dissipation and amusement afford a more efficacious remedy, since in these the heart has nothing to do:—in the midst of the gayest scenes, and surrounded by all that the world calls pleasure, it will shrink into itself, and feel its own bitterness with redoubled force.

It is vain to endeavour to take from the wretched, the sense of suffering; pain and grief must be felt; they can neither be subdued by argument, nor lost in dissipation; and while they remain, it is impossible to enjoy that ease which by some is represented as the greatest good of man—they must exclude it:—But must they therefore exclude all positive happiness? surely no. The wounded heart may still be open to enjoyment, and here it must seek for consolation; it cannot
indeed

indeed be insensible of pain, but it may yet be sensible of pleasure. And happy indeed are they who have acquired a relish for such pleasures, as pain and sorrow cannot take away; since these, sooner or later, must be the lot of all.

Of this kind are the pleasures of affection and benevolence; they enlarge the heart, they prevent it from dwelling on its own sorrows, and teach it to seek for happiness in the good of others; and those who in their happiest days were accustomed to do this, will not become insensible to such pleasures, because they are themselves in a state of suffering.

Every instance of kindness, every friendly endeavour to give ease and comfort, will still rejoice the heart; the pleasure of seeing others virtuous and happy, may still be felt; the earnest

earnest desire to make them so, may still be cherished; and that desire is in itself a pleasing sensation. The endeavour which it excites affords still higher pleasure; and when that endeavour is blessed with success, the benevolent heart will feel a real joy, to which its own sufferings cannot render it insensible.

† By every such exertion, the mind will gain new strength, and enjoy new pleasure; its native vigour, which sorrow had depressed, and which no interested views could have called forth to action, will be restored by benevolence;—the wounded heart may feel the delight of self-approbation;—in short, the afflicted may enjoy the best pleasures of the happy.

But after all it must be allowed, that all our pleasures, in this imperfect state, even those of
the

the most refined and exalted kind, are liable to numberless sorrows and disappointments:— Friends may be removed by absence, or by death; the faults and imperfections of those we love, may wound the heart; affection may be repaid with unkindness, and benefits with ingratitude; the most earnest endeavour to relieve the distressed, may prove unsuccessful; and the sincerest desire to promote the happiness of others, may miss its aim: in short, every pursuit in this world may end in disappointment. And this thought might indeed be sufficient to check the ardour of the mind, and discourage the best endeavours, had we not a never-failing resource in that assistance and support which Religion offers.

It is in the power of every one to secure to himself a Happiness of which nothing in this world can deprive him;—a Hope, which is
not

not liable to disappointment;—a Friend, who never will forsake him, and who will be always willing and able to assist him.

Those who are placed in a happy situation in this world, if at the same time they can rejoice in such thoughts as these, may enjoy the good which they possess. Every blessing bestowed upon them will fill their hearts with love and gratitude to Him from whom it comes; and these sentiments will add new relish to every pleasure, and make them become real and lasting advantages, means to promote their eternal felicity, not hindrances to stop them in their way, as, by the perverse use of them, they too often are.

Prompted by the same love and gratitude, they will indeed rejoice in giving the best proof of them, by an earnest endeavour to do good

to others; and in this aim they cannot be disappointed, though they should prove unsuccessful; for the honest endeavour they may be certain will be accepted.

The fear of losing the blessings they possess, will not deprive them of the pleasure of enjoying them; for they remember in whose hands they are; they know they shall enjoy them as long as is really best for them; and that if all else were taken from them, they are secure of an unfailing resource, an Almighty Comforter.

They consider their best enjoyments as independent on this world; the pleasures of friendship and benevolence, though here allayed by disappointment, and interrupted by death, they hope will be renewed hereafter, and

and enjoyed, pure and unmixed, through eternity.

The love and gratitude they feel, the delight they take in every means of expressing them, will constitute a part of their happiness hereafter.

The heavenly contemplations which exalt their minds, and make them feel that they were formed for higher enjoyments than this world affords, will raise their hopes to that state where alone they can find objects suited to them,

And thus every blessing bestowed upon them will be so received, that it will be truly enjoyed here, and will prove a source of real and lasting happiness: and the present good will neither be allayed by anxiety, nor succeeded

ceeded by weariness and disgust. While it remains, it will be enjoyed to the utmost; and when it is taken away, it will not be immoderately regretted, since that to which it owed its greatest relish will still remain, and prove a source of happiness in the days of affliction and disappointment, as well as in those of prosperity and success.

It is very certain that there are few, if any, either amongst the afflicted, or amongst the happy, who enjoy to the utmost all the blessings which are bestowed upon them. Those who take a view of their own situation in life, with a sincere desire to make the best of it, will probably find much more happiness within their power, than in the moments of uneasiness and discontent they are apt to imagine. This observation is generally true, even of the greatest sufferers.

But

But let us suppose that this were not the case, for it must be allowed to be possible that all earthly comforts may be taken away:—A person who has long been struggling against the severest afflictions of body and of mind, may have met with nothing but disappointments; and in the midst of all, he may not find a friend to assist and support him, or to bestow that tender soothing consolation, which can almost convert afflictions into pleasures; or, what is still more painful, the friend from whom he expected this may change, and embitter those sufferings he should alleviate; the endeavours to do good which benevolence inspires, may prove unsuccessful; in a word, all in this world may fail.

This is indeed a case rarely, if ever, to be met with; but as it must be allowed to be possible, let us take things in the worst light

imaginable, and then consider the happiness which yet remains to balance these afflictions, in the heavenly comforts which religion offers.

The most unhappy may yet find a Friend to whom they may freely unbosom all their sorrows with the fullest confidence, and rest secure of finding that consolation which is really best for them, since He is both able and willing to bestow it:—this is a happiness of which none but themselves can ever deprive them. Though slighted and neglected, perhaps oppressed and injured by the world, yet are they certain that He regards their sufferings, He hears their prayers, and will reward their patience.

When they consider that all events are at his disposal, and these sufferings are permitted for their greater good, their submission, instead

stead of being full of terror and anxiety, will be an act of love and confidence;—even the wish that they could choose their own lot, will be suppressed; and they will rejoice in the thought that Infinite Wisdom and Goodness will do it for them.

When they remember, that all afflictions are trials, and that by bearing them as they ought, they may best express their love and gratitude, and secure his favour and protection,—the activity of their minds will be again awakened, and their utmost efforts again exerted, with a pleasure and satisfaction which can attend on no other pursuit, since all but this are liable to disappointment. Here the intention, not the success, will be considered; and the sincere wish, when nothing more is in their power, will be accepted.

If we are engaged in the service of a friend, every difficulty becomes a source of pleasure; we exert ourselves with delight in finding means to conquer it; we even enjoy any suffering which can procure his advantage, or express our affection.

A satisfaction of the same kind may continually be enjoyed by the afflicted. It is true, their sufferings can bring no advantage to their Creator; his happiness can receive no addition from the feeble efforts of his creatures; yet still, to a heart full of love and gratitude, there is a pleasure in exerting every effort to express those sentiments, in doing or suffering any thing which may conduce to that end. In this view, afflictions may be received with real satisfaction, since they afford continual opportunities of expressing our readiness to conform to his will, even when
it

it is most contrary to our own; and this is the strongest proof of love and confidence we are able to give; and therefore, to the heart which truly feels them, must be attended with a satisfaction such as pleasure cannot bestow.

When we read the histories of those who have voluntarily undergone the most painful sufferings, rather than transgress their duty, we admire their virtues, and esteem them happy. Those who receive as they ought the trials which are sent them, do all in their power to follow their examples, and may, in a great degree, enjoy the same happiness; their aims, their wishes, are the same; like them, they bless Him who permits the trial; they would detest the thought of escaping from it, by being guilty of the smallest crime; they rejoice in suffering for his sake, and

depend, with entire confidence, on his assistance and support.

If at any time the affliction seems too severe to be supported, and nature almost sinks under the trial, let them anticipate the future time, and think with what sentiments they shall look back upon it;—think, if they can, what joy it will afford them to reflect, that no sufferings could ever shake their resolution; that their love to their Almighty Father, and desire to be conformable to his will, have been still the ruling principles of their hearts, even in the midst of the severest trials; that their afflictions have not made them neglect their duty to Him, or to their fellow-creatures; that their best endeavours have been still exerted, and their entire confidence ever placed in Him.

Then

Then let them look farther still, and think of the time when all earthly joys and sorrows will be for ever passed away, and nothing of them will remain but the manner in which they have been received; let them think of the happiness of those who have been "made perfect through sufferings," and who will then look forward to an eternity of bliss.

Will they then wish that they had suffered less? Or who would wish it now, if such are the blessed fruits of sufferings? And it depends on ourselves to make them so: for the assistance of Him who alone can support our weakness, will never be wanting to those who seek it.

Such reflections, such hopes, as these, can surely afford pleasures more than sufficient to overbalance any afflictions to which we may
be

be liable in this world:—And *these* are pleasures which the greatest sufferer may feel, and in which the most unhappy may rejoice.

To conclude:—Religion cannot prevent losses and disappointments, pains and sorrows; for to these, in this imperfect state, we must be liable; nor does it require us to be insensible to them, for that would be impossible; but in the midst of all, and even when all earthly pleasures fail, it commands—it instructs—it enables us to be happy.





ON THE

CHARACTER of LÆTITIA.

IN the midst of a cheerful and animated conversation, the attention of a large company was suddenly called off by the tolling of a neighbouring bell, and the appearance of a funeral passing by the windows. An enquiry was made whose it was? with that sort of indolent curiosity which is sometimes excited by things supposed to be no way interesting, and which hardly attends to the answer;—but a gloom was spread over every countenance, when it was known to be the funeral of the young and beautiful LÆTITIA, who

who had lately been the ornament of every assembly in which she appeared, the admiration of all beholders, and the delight of all who knew her intimately.

As several in the company had been acquainted with LÆTITIA, the conversation naturally turned upon her character. The thought of youth and beauty thus nipped in their bloom, impresses an awful, yet tender melancholy in the minds even of indifferent persons, which disposes them to serious thoughts, and makes them anxious to know particulars; and the accounts now given of her engaged the attention of all who were present.

LÆTITIA had just entered her eighteenth year, her person was uncommonly beautiful, animated by all the vivacity which is natural

to that age, and all the sweetness of the most amiable character. Her youthful spirits had never been damped by ill health, nor checked by unkindness and severity; her tender parents, far from restraining her pleasures, had only endeavoured to secure them by innocence, improve them by virtue, and exalt them by religion.

The peace and joy of her heart diffused a charm on every object which surrounded her; and every employment in which she was engaged, afforded her new pleasures;—she pursued her studies, and enjoyed her amusements, with the same spirit and alacrity;—every kindness she received filled her heart with gratitude, and all she could bestow was felt by her with that innocent exultation which true benevolence inspires, and in which vanity claims no part.

In

In the fullness of her heart she might have related some instance of distress which she had relieved, with the same sentiments with which she related any other circumstance that afforded her the greatest pleasure; for it never entered her thoughts to admire herself for such things, or talk of them as if she was surpris'd at herself for doing them. They appeared to her so natural, that she imagined every one would have done the like, and only thought herself more fortunate than others, when an opportunity presented itself for indulging her inclination.

From the same principle proceeded her endeavours to please in society. She wished to make all as happy as she could; she wished to deserve and gain affection; but she never thought of supplanting others, or endeavouring to assume a superiority: and far from desiring

desiring to lessen their merits, in order to raise herself by the comparison, she was eager to procure for all, the good which she valued herself; and therefore disposed to represent all in the most favourable light. Indeed, it cost her no difficulty to do so, because all appeared to her in that light. Happy in herself, and disposed to be pleased, her attention was naturally turned to the most pleasing circumstances, in every event, and every character.

She often appeared delighted with things which others might have considered as trifles, and that not only in her amusements, but in the characters of those with whom she conversed. Her imagination was disposed to magnify every good and amiable quality, and every little instance of kindness and attention bestowed upon herself; but her affections, though

though warm and lively, were far from being indiscriminately lavished on all; her heart felt a kind word or look often much more strongly than it deserved, but its tenderest attachments were reserved for a chosen few; and her friendship, like her benevolence, was ardent, animated, and disposed to run almost into excess.

The same disposition appeared in other instances. She enjoyed amusements as much as those who think of nothing but pursuing them, and even found pleasures where many would have thought they shewed superior sense by being tired; but from the midst of the gayest assembly, where her vivacity inspired pleasure to all around her, she would have flown at the call of benevolence, friendship, duty, or religion; and far from thinking she made a sacrifice by doing so, would have enjoyed

enjoyed the opportunity of exchanging a pleasure which only amused her fancy, for one which touched her heart.

In common conversation, her innocent sprightliness, and artless sweetness of manners, won the hearts of those who might have been inclined to envy her uncommon excellencies. There was a gentle earnestness in her solicitude to please, which animated every look and action, and was far different from the studied display of vanity, and the artificial insinuations of flattery; it spoke her true and genuine sentiments, kept her continually upon the watch for every opportunity of expressing her attention and regard for others, and added a charm, which can hardly be described, even to the most trifling instances of them.

The

The worst tempers were softened in her presence, and the most gloomy dispositions could hardly avoid sharing in her pleasures; yet the greatest flow of spirits could never, even for a single moment, make her lay aside the gentleness and modesty of her character. She even felt, in a great degree, that timidity which is natural to a delicate mind; but it served only to render her conversation more engaging and interesting; it was a diffidence of herself, not a fear of others.

In the midst of the most playful sallies of her lively fancy, and while she was gaining the admiration of all, far from appearing to lay claim to it, her looks and manners seemed continually to solicit their indulgence, and shewed that she thought she stood in need of it; yet accustomed to encouragement from her infancy, and judging of the benevolence
of

of others by her own, she was disposed to feel a confidence in all, and to be very unguarded in her conversation; but the innocence of her heart afforded her a security which the greatest caution cannot supply;—she knew no disguise, but she had need of none.

She felt for the sufferings of others with the tenderest sensibility, but she expressed it, not by boasting of a sentiment which has no merit except in its application, but by an eagerness to assist and relieve, which made her ready to attempt even impossibilities, and by those gentle soothing attentions, from which even hopeless distress must receive some degree of pleasure. Her disposition to enjoy every pleasure to the utmost, made even the least success in her endeavours of this kind appear to her a happiness which could hardly be too dearly purchased.

Her early piety, far from allaying her pleasures, had added to every enjoyment the pleasing sentiment of love and gratitude to Him by whom they were bestowed, and the animating hope of brighter joys hereafter. She daily offered up the affections of her innocent heart to Him who made it, and implored his assistance and protection, with that delightful confidence which true religion can alone inspire;—without this, her greatest pleasures would have wanted their highest relish, and their best security; with it she could enjoy them without anxiety, and consider them as the earnest of future happiness.

Such was LÆTITIA: when in the full bloom of youth and health, which seemed to promise many happy years, she was seized with a sudden illness, which in a few days brought her to the grave.

An

An account like this could not fail to excite in the mind of every hearer, reflections of the most serious kind. Such strokes as these, when youth, beauty, and gaiety, are thus suddenly snatched away, are felt even by the most thoughtless characters. The young are warned to consider the uncertainty of the advantages they possess, the vanity of every earthly pleasure, and the transient nature of those qualities which are at present the objects of general admiration; while those who are farther advanced in life, are taught still more powerfully the necessity of preparing for a change, from which even youth and health are no security.

The importance of the present moment is impressed on every mind, by the thought of the uncertainty of the next. All acknowledge the folly of setting our hearts on pleasures

just ready to escape from us, and the necessity of providing such comforts as may support us in that awful hour which perhaps is now at hand, and such hopes as death itself cannot take away.

Such are the reflections which naturally occur, when a sudden stroke brings home the thought of death to every mind; especially when it has fallen where there was least reason to expect it, and when youth and beauty render the object peculiarly interesting.

Such reflections afford an important and affecting lesson, which all must feel for the time, and of which all should endeavour to preserve the impression.

In such a state of mind, when we consider religion as our support and comfort in the
hour

hour of death, and as affording us a happiness which shall last beyond the grave, all must be sensible of its value, and wish to feel its force, and obey its precepts, that they may share in those blessings which that religion can bestow.

But the thought of death, even when attended with the most striking circumstances, seldom makes a lasting impression; and those who are merely awed into religion by that consideration, may be too apt to lay it aside, when a variety of other objects succeed, and call off their attention; or may connect the thought of it with a gloomy idea, which disturbs their pursuits and their enjoyments, and which therefore they are glad to drive away. They feel themselves well and happy; they converse with others who are so; new scenes arise, and present objects make a strong

K 3

impression;

impression; and in the hurry of business or of pleasure, the funeral of LÆTITIA is quickly forgotten.

But it is not from her funeral alone that instruction may be derived.—The thought of her early and unexpected death must indeed impress an awe on every mind, and lead to many reflections of the highest importance to all; and which, by such a stroke, are shewn in the strongest and most affecting light: but those excited by her life and character may also afford many useful lessons, which, though less obvious and striking, are yet well worthy of our attention.

The pleasures of youth are often considered by those who are farther advanced in life, with a mixture of pity and contempt, as being the effects of ignorance of the world, and of a kind

kind of enthusiasm, which embellishes every object, and feasts on imaginary enjoyments. This opinion is certainly in some degree true; for none ever lived to maturity, without feeling and lamenting the disappointment of their youthful hopes, and the loss of that pleasing illusion which once led the mind from one enjoyment to another, and filled up the many tedious vacancies of real life; but the disappointment of too sanguine hopes is very apt to lead to a contrary extreme.

The pleasures of youth are indeed greatly owing to the dispositions of the youthful mind; and these, it must be owned, are often the effects of illusions, which time and experience must dispel; but they are far from being always so; and many of those dispositions on which the pleasures of youth are founded, are such as the wise would wish, and endeavour

endeavour to preserve through every period of life.

That expectation of being pleased, which prevails so much in young persons, is one great source of their enjoyments. All are felt before hand, and their hopes are not easily given up; the conviction that they shall be pleased, makes a strong impression on the imagination, which often lasts long enough to make them really be so; when otherwise they would have found little reason for it. This illusion cannot indeed be preserved in its full force, but the same disposition to be pleased may yet remain; and there is hardly any thing of so much importance to the happiness of life.

We see people seek for sorrows, as if they were something very scarce and valuable,
which

which it would be a misfortune to overlook. Would they but employ as much attention in seeking for the innocent pleasures which every different situation might afford, and accustom themselves to consider every thing in the most favourable light, such a state of mind would in itself be pleasing, and would lead to many pleasures, which are too often lost merely for want of attending to them.

That desire to please which is so natural to youth, may indeed be discouraged by disappointments, but if preserved through life, will prove a source of pleasures to ourselves and others. It can make even trifles appear agreeable and engaging, and will in a great degree supply the want of every other talent, and render those who possess it always acceptable in society; often indeed much more so than those who are far superior to them in every other

other respect, but who neglect or despise those little attentions which this disposition will naturally inspire. These should, however, always be distinguished from artifice and flattery, which are the instruments of vanity, not the expressions of benevolence.

In youth, the affections of the heart are warm and lively; the pleasures, and even the hopes which they afford, are pursued, and enjoyed, to the utmost; probably they may lead to sorrows and disappointments; but they know little of their own interests, who endeavour to avoid these, by checking that activity of the mind, which is necessary to its improvement, as well as its happiness; or by suppressing sentiments on which our enjoyments must depend, and which (rightly directed) may prove the means of happiness here and hereafter.

The

The innocence of youth is another great source of its pleasures; but this is a happiness, which, like that of health, is generally estimated by its loss.

It is not necessary to consider the situation of a person who has been guilty of great crimes; all must be sensible that it is wretched; but many things, which, taken separately, may appear trifles, are yet sufficient to destroy that purity of heart without which every pleasure must be attended with some alloy. This indeed, in the strictest sense of the words, is not to be found in this imperfect state, even in youth itself; still less can it be expected in those who are farther advanced in life.

But innocence of intention, integrity of heart, and a sincere endeavour to do right,
are

are qualities which all may possess, and which afford a security and peace of mind, such as they can never enjoy who are in any degree wanting in them; whose professions differ from their sentiments; and who indulge themselves in those little arts which vanity or self-interest so often suggest, and which are so common in the general intercourse of society, that the particular instances of them are seldom made the objects of attention, or considered in the light of real faults.

The candour of mind, and unsuspecting temper so natural to youth, are also productive of many pleasures which painful experience must in some degree destroy. But how many, by the thought of this, are led into errors far more pernicious, and often not less distant from the truth; for suspicion can deceive, as well as simplicity, and frequently

quently misses the mark as effectually, by going beyond it.

How greatly is the peace of society disturbed, by offences taken which never were intended, by groundless doubts and apprehensions, and by the imputation of faults and bad intentions which never in reality existed.

To avoid all error is certainly desirable, but the one extreme is liable to it, as well as the other; and that disposition of mind, which in cases that can admit a doubt inclines rather to the most favourable side, is certainly by far the happiest for the possessor, to say nothing of the obligations which benevolence and charity lay upon us in this respect.

Such reflections as these may naturally arise from the consideration of a Character like that
of

of LÆTITIA. Her youth affords many useful lessons to grey hairs, as well as to those who like herself are just entering into life, and who perhaps, like her, may be allowed only a few short years to prepare themselves for eternity. Her death sets in a strong light the necessity of such preparation;—her life shews at the same time the happiness of it.

That Religion is necessary to our comfort in the time of affliction, and our support in the hour of death, all who have any sense of it are ready to allow; but if considered merely in that light, it is too apt to be neglected in the days of health and prosperity, or obeyed with a cold, and often reluctant submission, as a restraint with which it is necessary to comply, in order to obtain the happiness of a future state. Few consider sufficiently its importance to happiness, even in this life, and the

the present pleasures, as well as future hopes, which it may afford to those in whom it is not merely a conviction of the understanding, but a real sentiment of the heart.

Let us then represent to ourselves the situation of those on whom the great truths which Religion reveal have made a just impress; who feel that love and gratitude which are due to Infinite Perfection and Infinite Goodness; and in whom these sentiments are the leading principles and animating motives for every action.

To such persons, how delightful is the thought, that they are under the guidance and protection of an indulgent Father, who can and will order all things for their real good; that every blessing bestowed in this life is not merely a present enjoyment, but an instance
of

of his goodness, a call to that ever-pleasing sentiment—affectionate gratitude, and an earnest of future happiness! Such thoughts give a security to all pleasures; they are no longer enjoyed with trembling anxiety, from a dread, that the next moment may snatch them away; for the next moment depends on an Almighty Friend, with whom we can safely intrust our dearest interests.

It has been well observed, by an excellent writer, *Qu'il ni a point de sentiment plus doux au cœur de l'homme que la confiance*; but if this be true even in our intercourse with frail and imperfect beings, in whom we may be mistaken; and who, though their intentions may be sincerely good, are often unable to help us, and ignorant of what is best for us; how much greater enjoyment must it afford, when fixed where it can never be mistaken

taken

taken or disappointed! How encouraging is the certainty, that He who sees the deepest recesses of the heart, will observe and accept the secret good intention which could not be brought to effect, and the sincere endeavour which has been disappointed, and perhaps misinterpreted in this world.

To relieve distress, to do good to others and promote their happiness, must give pleasure to every one who is not lost to all sense of goodness; but how greatly is this pleasure increased, if the object on whom it is exercised be endeared to us by particular affection, or has been recommended to us by one who is so, and to whom we can in this manner express our affection! What spirit does this consideration give to our endeavours, and what an exalted pleasure attends their success!

This pleasure, in the highest degree, Religion adds to every exertion of benevolence. It strengthens the ties of natural philanthropy, by shewing us in all mankind the children of one Common Parent, the objects of the same Redeeming Love, and the candidates for the same Eternal Happiness. In every scene of distress to which we can afford relief, it reminds us, that our best Friend has assured us, that whatever is done to one of the least of these his brethren, will be considered as done unto himself: and this pleasure depends not on success; for the endeavour, and even the *wish*, will be accepted as a proof of love and gratitude.

From the same consideration, Religion becomes the only sure foundation of that good-humour which is the charm of social life. Can beings, who hope in a few years, perhaps
in

in a few hours, to be united in eternal love and happiness, be disposed to be angry with each other about trifles, and find a satisfaction in saying or doing what may give pain?

Were these truths felt as well as acknowledged, they must not only put an end to all violent hatred and animosity, but must also soften all those little irregularities of temper, which so frequently prevent even good people from being as happy in each other as they ought to be.

At the same time, when we are hurt by such things in others, particularly in those we truly love and value, (and from whom, therefore, a trifle can give pain) how pleasing to look forward to the time when all these imperfections shall be ended, and we shall find nothing to allay the pleasures of affection and esteem;

which in this life can never be enjoyed in their utmost perfection, from the mixture of human frailty which is found in a greater or less degree even in truly worthy characters.

But when friendship rises to its purest heights, and meets with as little of such allay as is possible in this imperfect state, still how greatly are even the refined pleasures which it affords improved and exalted by Religion! How delightful is the tie which unites two worthy characters in the noblest pursuits, when each is strengthened and animated by the other; and their pleasures, far from being allayed by the continual dread of separation, are heightened by the hope that they will be lasting as eternity.

When the mind is engaged in the pursuit of improvement, and pleased with any little
advance

advance it can make; or when it delights itself with the consideration of what is beautiful and amiable in the natural or moral system; how greatly is the pleasure increased by looking forward to a time, when every faculty shall be improved beyond what we can at present conceive, when we shall be qualified for the most exalted enjoyments, and all our contemplations employed on the most perfect objects!

But when we endeavour to enlarge on a subject like this, we must find all our expressions fall short of what we wish to describe.

These are but a few instances of the advantages which may be derived from Religion, even in the happiest state,—a faint sketch of its power to refine, exalt, and secure our pleasures. Happy they to whom experience shall

give a more perfect idea of it! They will not be reduced, in the day of affliction, to seek for comforts with which they were before unacquainted, and pleasures which they know not how to enjoy; for the best pleasures of their happiest days will remain, unallayed by any misfortune that can befall them; and the mind, long accustomed to dwell on them and enjoy them, will grow more attached to them, as other pleasures fail, and be enabled to look forward to the stroke which shall snatch them all away, not only with calm resignation, but with joyful hope.

Far be it ever from us to limit the mercies of the Almighty, or discourage any from having recourse to them, even in their latest moments. Far be it also from us to judge of the future happiness of any, by their present state of mind. An old age of languor and
dejection,

dejection, a death of terror and anxiety, may often be succeeded by an eternity of bliss.

But let those who now enjoy health and prosperity never forget, that they can have no reason to depend on finding Religion their comfort in the hour of death, if they do not find it their happiness in life.



CHARACTER OF LITERATURE

On a desert island and anxiety may
be reflected by an anxiety of life.

For the whole world is a vast and
mysterious new world, and we have
not yet seen a light on the horizon. It
is not the hour of death, if they do not
find their way out in life.



O N

P O L I T E N E S S.

“**L**’HYPOCRISIE est un hommage que
“le vice rend a la vertu,” says LA
ROCHEFOUCAULT, and in one sense it cer-
tainly is so, for it is an acknowledgment of
the superior excellence of virtue; and one
who viewed mankind with the eyes of LA
ROCHEFOUCAULT, must consider Hypocrisy
as an advantage to all.

ROUSSEAU, quoting this passage, adds,
“Oui comme celui des assassins de Cesar, qui
“se

“ se prosternoient a ses pieds pour l’ egorger.
“ plus surement; couvrir sa mechanceté du
“ dangereux manteau de l’ Hypocrisie, ce
“ n’est point honorer la Vertu, c’est l’out-
“ rager en profanant ses enseignes.” It is
indeed the homage of an enemy; and of all
the enemies of virtue, there is perhaps none
whose attacks have been more pernicious;
and that not only by throwing a disguise over
vice, but by setting up an artificial image in
the place of real virtue, and confounding the
idea of the one with the other, till every ap-
pearance is suspected, and the existence of
that which is true and genuine is rendered
doubtful, to those whose hearts do not bear
testimony to its certainty.

There is hardly any thing which (con-
sidered abstractedly) appears so natural as Sin-
cerity. Speech was given us to express our
thoughts

thoughts and feelings; and to use it to express what we do not think and feel, is an evident perversion of it. But alas! man, fallen from his native innocence, now *dares* not be sincere; conscious of guilt, he seeks disguise; and conscious of disguise in himself, he is ready to suspect it in others.

Thus insincerity first made its way amongst mankind, and by such considerations it has since been cherished and encouraged, though every heart in secret bears testimony against it; and even amongst the greatest hypocrites, few would venture openly to defend it in matters of importance: in these all are ready to declare against it, and sincerity is a quality to which all lay claim; yet in the daily occurrences of common life, it seems to be laid aside by a kind of tacit agreement: few make any scruple of deviating from it themselves,

or

or seem to expect a conformity to it in others: but deceit is practised when it can answer any purpose, and even acknowledged on many occasions, as if it were in itself a matter of the greatest indifference.

It is much too common, in every instance, to judge of actions, not according to what they really are, but according to the impression they make upon us. The man who would be shocked at the thought of being a butcher, will feel no remorse at impaling a butterfly; and he who would scorn to tell a solemn lie, will make no scruple of professing esteem and regard which he does not feel, or of encouraging an unexperienced young woman in follies which in his heart he despises, and which he knows will render her ridiculous. Yet the merit of actions depends not on their apparent effects, nor are we sufficiently

ciently acquainted with the consequences which may attend them, to be qualified to judge how far they may extend.

When once we deviate from the straight path, however small the deviation may be, and however strong the reasons for it, we can never know how far we may be led astray, nor what may be the consequences of that deviation. Could these be known at once, the fault which was considered merely as a trifle, would often appear shocking, even to those who paid least attention to it, though in fact they can make no difference in its real nature.

If insincerity be in itself a fault, it must be so independent of the consequences which may follow from it; yet the most trifling consideration seems often to be thought a sufficient excuse for it, and we even hear it pleaded for,

for, as necessary to the peace and pleasure of society. But to whom can it be necessary? Surely to none but those who have something criminal, or at least something disagreeable, to conceal, and whose real characters will not bear the light. The good and amiable qualities want only to be seen as they are, in order to be pleasing and useful; and if every heart were such as it ought to be, the delight of society would be to throw aside all disguise, let every one express his genuine sentiments, and appear to others such as he really is.

But it is easier to polish the manners, than to reform the heart; to disguise a fault, than to conquer it. He who can venture to appear as he is, must be what he ought to be; —a difficult and arduous task! which often requires the sacrifice of many a darling inclination, and the exertion of many a painful effort:—

effort:—and if there can be any hope of attaining the same end by a shorter and easier method, it is not wonderful that numbers are glad to have recourse to it.

This is, in fact, the principal cause of that insincerity which prevails so much in the ordinary intercourse of society, though there are many others which contribute to it.

Pride makes men endeavour to seem better than they really are, by assuming an appearance of those virtues which they want, and endeavouring to disguise those vices which they cherish.

Selfishness makes them wish to engross a larger share of esteem and regard than is bestowed on others: this introduces flattery, which is, in fact, an endeavour to purchase
esteem,

esteem, and even affection, with counterfeit coin. It is playing upon the weaknesses of others for our own advantage, and running the hazard of encouraging them in folly, and even in vice; and thereby doing them a real and material injury, merely for the sake of gaining to ourselves the trifling satisfaction of unmerited approbation.

This, to a person of any delicacy, should give more pain than pleasure, from a consciousness of having indeed deserved the contrary: for who, that is not lost to every generous sentiment, could bear to receive a tribute of gratitude and good-will, in return for professions of esteem which he never felt, and kindness which he never intended? He may indeed despise the folly and vanity of those who can be pleased with such professions, and possibly they may often be deserving of contempt;

tempt; but this is no alleviation of his fault, nor can even this excuse be always pleaded.

An innocent heart may be pleased with the flattery, (without giving entire credit to it) when it is considered as an expression of real kindness: conscious that its own sentiments are warm, lively, and apt to run into excess, it may naturally suppose the same of others; and thus the poison is received under a pleasing disguise, till by degrees it grows familiar, and may produce the most fatal effects.

True Politeness—like true Benevolence, the source from which it flows—aims at the real good of all mankind, and sincerely endeavours to make all easy and happy, not only by considerable services, but by all those little attentions which can contribute to it. In this it differs essentially from that artificial polite-

which too often assumes its place, and which consists in an endeavour, not to make others happy, but to serve the interests of our own vanity, by gaining their favour and good opinion, though at the expence of truth, goodness, and even of their happiness, if the point in view can be obtained by destroying it.

Flattery is an essential part of this sort of politeness, the means by which it generally succeeds: but true politeness stands in need of no such assistance: it is the genuine expression of the heart, it seeks no disguise, and will never flatter. He who acts from this principle, will express to all what he truly feels, — a real good-will, a sincere concern for their happiness, and an earnest desire to promote it. He will not express admiration for a fool, nor esteem for a bad man; but he will express benevolence to all, because he feels it; and he will

will endeavour to do them good, as far as may be in his power, because he sincerely wishes it.

Flattery is directly contrary to this; it seeks its own ends, without considering what may be the consequence with regard to others. It is also essentially different from that regard which is paid to real merit; for that is a tribute which is certainly its due, and may be both paid and received with innocence and pleasure: but the expressions of this will generally be such as escape undesignedly from the heart, and are far different from the studied language of flattery.

Indeed flattery is not, in general, addressed to real and acknowledged merit. It has been observed by one who seems to have studied it as a science, that a professed beauty must not be complimented upon her person, but her

understanding, because there she may be supposed to be more doubtful of her excellence; while one whose pretensions to beauty are but small, will be most flattered by compliments on her personal charms.

The same may be observed as to other qualities: for though most people would consider flattery as an insult, if addressed to such qualities as they know they do not possess, yet in general they are best pleased with it where they feel any degree of doubt, or suspect that others may do so.

When Cardinal RICHELIEU expressed more desire to be admired as a poet and a critic, than as one of the greatest politicians in the world, we cannot suppose it was because he thought these talents of more consequence in a prime minister; but he was certain
of

of his excellence in one respect, and wanted not to be told what all the world must think of him; in the other he wished to excel, and was not sure of success.

The same may probably be the reason of the partiality which some writers are said to have expressed for their worst performances. It seems scarce possible to suppose that MILTON really preferred his *Paradise Regained* to his *Paradise Lost*; but if he had any doubts of its success, it was very natural for him to feel more anxiety about it, and to endeavour to persuade others, and even himself, of its superior merit.

This is a weakness in human nature, of which flattery generally takes advantage, without considering, that by such means it not only encourages vanity in those to whom

it is addressed, but may also draw them in, to make themselves appear ridiculous, by the affectation of qualities to which they have little or no pretensions.

Nor does this artificial kind of flattery generally stop at such qualities as are in themselves indifferent; it is too often employed (and perhaps still more successfully) in disguising and palliating faults, and thereby affording encouragement to those whose inclinations were restrained by some degree of remorse.

It is unjust, as well as ill-natured, to take advantage of the weaknesses of others, in order to obtain our own ends, at the hazard of rendering them ridiculous; but it is something far worse to lend a helping hand to those who hesitate at engaging in the paths
of

of vice, and feel a painful conflict between their duty and their inclination; or to endeavour to lessen the sense of duty in those who are not free from some degree of remorse, and desire to amend. Yet these are, in general, the persons to whom flattery is most acceptable:—it soothes their inclinations, and dispels their doubts, at the same time that it gratifies their vanity; it frees them from a painful sensation, and saves them the trouble of a difficult task, while it affords them a present pleasure; and if it does not entirely conquer their scruples, at least it removes one restraint which lay in their way, the fear of being censured. Yet how often is all this done by those who would think themselves insufferably injured, if they were to be supposed capable of picking a pocket, though in that case the injury might perhaps be trifling, and hardly worth a thought.

If

If "he who filches from me my good name," has made me "poor indeed;" what shall we say of him, who from selfish views, perhaps merely for the sake of obtaining a trifling gratification of his vanity, has done what may lead me to deserve to forfeit that good name, even in the smallest instance? And if he has done this by deceit, and has found means to gain affection or esteem in return for it, what other act of dishonesty can exceed the baseness of such proceeding? But these things are too apt to make little impression when practised in what are called trifles, though that circumstance makes no change in their real nature, and none can say how far the consequences even of trifles may extend.

Those who make no scruple of such methods as these, if at the same time, by being much accustomed to polite company, they
have

have acquired a certain elegance of manners, and facility of expressing themselves, will seldom fail to please, upon a slight acquaintance; but the best actor will find it difficult always to keep up to his part.

He who is polite only by rule, will probably, on some occasion or other, be thrown off his guard; and he who is continually professing sentiments which he does not feel, will hardly be able always to do it in such a manner as to avoid betraying himself.

Whatever degree of affection or esteem is gained without being deserved, though at first it may be both paid and received with pleasure, will probably, after a time, vanish into nothing, or prove a source of disappointment and mortification to both parties; and even while the delusion lasts, it is scarce possible

it

it should be attended with entire satisfaction to the deceiver; for deceit of all kinds, from the greatest to the most trifling instance of it, must be attended with a degree of anxiety, and can never enjoy that perfect ease and security, which attends on those whose words and actions are the natural undisguised expressions of the sentiments of the heart.

But as mankind are apt to run from one extreme to another, we sometimes see, that from a dislike to this artificial politeness, which is continually glossing over faults, both in those who practise it, and those they practise it upon, a roughness and even brutality of manners is adopted, and dignified with the title of sincerity.

Some persons pique themselves upon saying all they think, and are continually professing

to

to do so; and as a proof of this, they will say things the most shocking to others, and give them pain without the least remorse, for fear of being suspected of flattering them. But is this then the language of their heart? Alas! if it be so, let them set about reforming it, and make it fit to be seen, before they make their boast of exposing it to public view: yet perhaps there may be as much affectation in this conduct as in the contrary extreme.

Pride may think to gain its own ends by an appearance of singularity, and by setting itself above the approbation of others, as vanity does by condescending to the meanest methods, in order to obtain it.

That sincerity which is displayed with ostentation, is generally to be suspected. The
conduct

conduct which an honest heart inspires flows naturally from it; and those who say rough things, in order to convince others of their sincerity, give some reason to doubt of their being perfectly convinced of it themselves.

Both these extremes are not only pernicious to the present peace and pleasure of society, but may also lead to very fatal consequences.

The flatterer encourages vice and folly, undermines the principles of virtue, and gains, by fraud and artifice, a degree of esteem and regard to which he has no title. The other does what he can to frighten every one from what is right; for if sincerity discover such a heart, disguise must appear desirable, and few consider sufficiently how much the cause of virtue must suffer, whenever a good quality is made to appear in an unamiable light.

Sincerity

Sincerity is indeed the ground-work of all that is good and valuable; however beautiful in appearance the structure may be, if it stand not on this foundation, it cannot last. But sincerity can hardly be called a virtue in itself, though a deviation from it is a fault:— A man may be sincere in his vices, as well as in his virtues; and he who throws off all restraint of remorse or shame, and even makes a boast of his vices, can claim no merit from the sincerity he expresses in so doing.

If he who is *sincere* cannot appear *amiable*, his heart is wrong, and his sincerity, far from being a virtue, serves only to add to the rest of his faults that of being willing to give pain to others, and able to throw aside that shame which should attend on every fault, whether great or small, and which is sometimes a
restraint

restraint to such as are incapable of being influenced by nobler motives.

Roughness of manners is in fact so far from being in itself a mark of sincerity, that it is merely the natural expression of *one* character, as gentleness is of *another*; and it should always be remembered, that to connect the idea of a good quality with a disagreeable appearance, is doing it a real injury, and leads to much more pernicious consequences than may at first be apprehended. Yet this is too often done, in many instances, not only by those who are interested to promote such a deception, but also by those who take up maxims upon credit, and believe what others have believed, without enquiring into the grounds of such opinions: and this is too much the case with the world in general.

Much

Much has been said and written on the subject of Politeness; but those who attempt to teach it, generally begin where they should end; and the instruction they give is something like teaching a set of elegant phrases in a language not understood, or instructing a person in music, by making him learn a few tunes by memory, without any knowledge of the grounds of the science. The polish of elegant manners is indeed truly pleasing, and necessary in order to make the worthiest character compleatly amiable; but it should be a *polish*, and not a *varnish*; the ornament of a good heart, not the disguise of a bad one.

Where a truly benevolent heart is joined with a delicate mind, and both are directed by a solid and refined understanding, the natural expression of these qualities will be the essential part of true politeness. All the rest

is mere arbitrary custom, which varies according to the manners of different nations; and different times. A conformity to this is, however, highly necessary; and those who neglect to acquire the knowledge and practice of it, betray the want of some of the above-mentioned qualities.

A person might as well refuse to speak the language of a country, as to comply with its customs in matters of indifference; like it, they are signs which, though unmeaning perhaps in themselves, are established by general consent to express certain sentiments; and a want of attention to them would appear to express a want of those sentiments, and therefore, in regard to others, would have the same bad effect. But though the neglect of these things be blameable, those who consider them as the essential part of true politeness

liness are much wider of the mark, for they may be strictly observed where that is entirely wanting.

To wound the heart, to mislead the understanding, to discourage a timid character, to expose an ignorant, though perhaps an innocent one, with numberless other instances in which a real injury is done, are things by no means inconsistent with the rules of politeness, and are often done by such as would not go out of the room before the person they have been treating in this manner; for though doing such things openly might be considered as ill-manners, there are many indirect ways which are just as effectual, and which may be practised without any breach of established forms. Like the Pharisees of old, they are scrupulous observers of the letter of the law in trifles, while they neglect

the spirit of it: and their observance of forms, far from giving any reason to depend on them, on the contrary often serves them only as a shelter, under which they can do such things as others would not dare to venture upon.

This is also, in general, only put on (like their best dress) when they are to go into company; for whenever politeness is not the natural expression of the heart, it must be in some degree a restraint, and will therefore probably be laid aside in every unguarded hour, that is to say, in all their intercourse with those whom it is of most consequence to them to endeavour to make happy:—And the unhappiness which sometimes reigns in families, who really possess many good qualities, and are not wanting in mutual affection, is often entirely owing to a want of that true

and

and sincere politeness which should animate the whole conduct, though the manner of expressing it must be different according to different circumstances.

Politeness is always necessary to complete the happiness of society in every situation, from the accidental meeting of strangers, to the most intimate connections of families and friends; but it must be the genuine expression of the settled character, or it cannot be constant and universal.

Let us then endeavour to consider the true foundation of that ever-pleasing quality distinguished by the name of Politeness, leaving the ornamental part of it, like other ornaments, to be determined by the fashion of the place and time.

To enter fully into the detail of such a character, would be an arduous task indeed; but the slightest sketch of what is truly pleasing, cannot fail to afford some satisfaction; and there can hardly be a more useful exercise to the mind, than to dwell on the consideration of good and amiable qualities, to endeavour to improve upon every hint, and raise our ideas of excellence as high as possible. We may then apply them to our own conduct in the ordinary occurrences of life; we may observe in what instances we fall short of that perfection we wish to attain, endeavour to trace the cause of the want of it in those instances, and learn not to disguise our faults, but to amend them.

True benevolence inspires a sincere desire to promote the happiness of others;—True delicacy enables us to enter into their feelings;

ings; it has a quick sense of what may give pleasure or pain, and teaches us to pursue the one, and avoid the other:—And a refined understanding points out the surest means of doing this in different circumstances, and of suiting our conduct to the persons with whom we are concerned. The union of all these will constitute that amiable character, of which true politeness is the genuine and natural expression.

The person who has not these qualities may indeed, by other means, attain to something like politeness on some occasions; but the person who possesses them in perfection, can never be wanting in it, even for a moment, in any instance, or in any company;—with superiors and inferiors, with strangers and with friends, the same character is still preserved, though expressed in different

N 3

ways.

ways. Those pleasing attentions, which are the charm of society, are continually paid with ease and satisfaction, for they are the natural language of such sentiments; and to such a character it would be painful to omit them; while every thing that can give unnecessary pain, even in the smallest degree, is constantly avoided, because directly contrary to it; for no pain can be inflicted by a person of such a disposition, without being strongly felt at the same time.

A superior degree of delicacy may often be the cause of much pain to those who possess it; they will be hurt at many things which would make no impression upon others; but from that very circumstance, they will be taught to avoid giving pain on numberless occasions, when others might do it. Whenever an excess of sensibility is supposed to produce

produce a contrary effect, we may be certain it is, in fact, an excess of selfishness.

True delicacy feels the pain it receives, but it feels much more strongly the pain it gives; and therefore will never give any, which it is possible to avoid. Far from being the cause of unreasonable complaints, uneasiness, and fretfulness, it will always carefully avoid such things; it will know how to make allowances for others, and rather suffer in silence, than give them unnecessary pain. It will inspire the gentlest and most engaging methods of helping others to amend their faults, and to correct those irregularities of temper which disturb the peace of society, without exposing them to the humiliation of being upbraided, or even of being made fully sensible of the offence they give; which often disposes people rather to seek for excuses, than

than to endeavour to amend. In short, it enlightens and directs benevolence; discovers numberless occasions for the exertion of it, which are too generally overlooked; and points out the surest and most pleasing means of attaining those ends which it pursues.

This earnest desire to promote the happiness of all, which is essential to true politeness, should always be carefully distinguished from that desire of pleasing, in which self-love is in fact the object; for though this may sometimes appear to produce the same effects with the other, it is by no means sufficiently to supply its place. It is indeed a natural sentiment, which is both pleasing and useful when kept within due bounds.

To gain the good-will of others, is soothing to the heart; and they must be proud or insensible,

insensible, in a very uncommon degree, who are not desirous of it: but much more than this is necessary to inspire true and constant politeness in every instance; and this desire, carried to excess, may produce very pernicious consequences.

From hence sometimes proceed endeavours to supplant others in the favour of those we wish to please, and to recommend ourselves at their expence, together with all the train of evils which attend on envy and jealousy.

From hence also flattery, and all those means of gaining favour, by which the real good of others is sacrificed to our own interest; and from hence much of the insincerity which prevails in common conversation. False maxims are adopted, and the real sentiments disguised; a disposition to
ridicule,

ridicule, censoriousness, and many other faults, are encouraged; and truth and goodness are sacrificed to the fear of giving offence: and thus an inclination in itself innocent, and calculated to promote the pleasure and advantage of society, is made productive of much evil, by being suffered to act beyond its proper sphere, and to take place of others which should always be preferred before it.

But even considered in the most favourable light, the desire of pleasing others falls far short of that endeavour to make them happy which benevolence inspires; for the one is only exerted in such instances as can gain observation; the other extends to every thing within its power, and can sacrifice even the desire of pleasing, to that of doing real good, whenever the one is inconsistent with the other.

other. Yet where this is done with that true politeness which is the effect of those qualities already mentioned, it is very likely to succeed better in the end, even as to gaining favour with all those whose favour is truly valuable: but it depends not on such circumstances; it is a settled character, which is naturally displayed in every instance, without art or study.

It may also be observed, that though a great degree of affection may subsist where this quality is wanting, yet that want will always prove an allay to the pleasure of it.

We see persons who really feel this affection, who would do and suffer a great deal to serve each other, and would consider a separation by absence or death as one of the greatest of evils; and who yet, merely from the want of this quality, lose a thousand opportunities

ridicule, censoriousness, and many other faults, are encouraged; and truth and goodness are sacrificed to the fear of giving offence: and thus an inclination in itself innocent, and calculated to promote the pleasure and advantage of society, is made productive of much evil, by being suffered to act beyond its proper sphere, and to take place of others which should always be preferred before it.

But even considered in the most favourable light, the desire of pleasing others falls far short of that endeavour to make them happy which benevolence inspires; for the one is only exerted in such instances as can gain observation; the other extends to every thing within its power, and can sacrifice even the desire of pleasing, to that of doing real good, whenever the one is inconsistent with the other.

other. Yet where this is done with that true politeness which is the effect of those qualities already mentioned, it is very likely to succeed better in the end, even as to gaining favour with all those whose favour is truly valuable: but it depends not on such circumstances; it is a settled character, which is naturally displayed in every instance, without art or study.

It may also be observed, that though a great degree of affection may subsist where this quality is wanting, yet that want will always prove an allay to the pleasure of it.

We see persons who really feel this affection, who would do and suffer a great deal to serve each other, and would consider a separation by absence or death as one of the greatest of evils; and who yet, merely from the want of this quality, lose a thousand opportunities

opportunities of promoting the happiness of those they truly love and value, and often give them real pain, without ever suspecting themselves of being wanting in regard and affection, because they feel that they would be ready to exert themselves in doing them any essential service.

Thus the pleasure of society is destroyed, and the supposed consciousness of possessing good qualities (for the exertion of which it is possible no opportunity may ever offer) is thought to make amends for the want of such as are truly pleasing and useful in every day and hour of our intercourse with each other.

Happiness consists not in some extraordinary instance of good fortune, nor virtue in some illustrious exertion of it; for such things are in the power of few: but if they are true
and

and genuine, the one must be practised, and the other enjoyed, in the constant and uniform tenor of our lives.

The person who on some extraordinary occasions does another some signal piece of service, is by no means so great a benefactor, as one who makes his life easy and happy by those pleasing attentions, the single instances of which too often pass unnoticed, but which altogether form the delight of social intercourse, and afford a calm and serene pleasure, without which, the most prosperous fortune can never bestow happiness.

There is a security in all our intercourse with persons of this character, which banishes that continual anxiety, and dread of giving offence, which so often throw a restraint on the freedom of conversation.

Such

Such persons wish all mankind to be amiable and happy, and therefore would certainly do their utmost to make them so; and far from taking offence where none was intended, they will be disposed to see all in the most favourable light; and even where they cannot approve, they will never be severe in their censures on any, but always ready to endeavour to bring them back to what is right, with that gentleness and delicacy, which shew it is for their sakes they wish it, and not in resentment of an injury received, or with a view to assume to themselves a superiority over them.

They will make allowances for all the little peculiarities of humour, all the weaknesses, and even the faults, as far as possible, of those with whom they converse, and carefully avoid whatever may tend to irritate and
aggravate

aggravate them; which is often done by such things as would be trifling and indifferent in other circumstances. This not only has a bad effect, by giving present uneasiness, but serves to strengthen a bad habit; for every fault (particularly a fault of the temper) is increased by exercise; and trifles, which might have been immediately forgotten, are kept up by being taken notice of, till they become real evils.

They will also carefully avoid exposing peculiarities and weaknesses, and never engage in the cruel sport of what is called "playing off a character;" by leading others to betray their own follies, and make themselves ridiculous without suspecting it. Such an amusement is by no means inconsistent with artificial politeness, because the person who suffers by it is not sensible of the injury; but

but it is directly contrary to that politeness which is true and sincere, because none of the qualities on which it is founded could ever inspire such conduct, or find any gratification in it. On the contrary, they would give a feeling of the injury, of which the person who suffers it is insensible.

There is indeed something particularly ungenerous in this conduct; it is like a robbery committed in breach of trust; and not only the benevolent, but the honest heart must be shocked at it. To say it is deserved, is no excuse: a punishment may often be deserved, but it can never be a pleasure to a benevolent heart to inflict it.

But it is impossible to enter into a particular detail of the conduct which this *sincere* politeness would inspire on every occasion.

Its

Its motive remaining always the same, the manner of expressing it will readily be varied as different circumstances may require; it will observe forms, where a neglect of them would give offence; it will be gentle, mild, and unaffected, at all times; compassionate, and tenderly attentive to the afflicted; indulgent to the weak, and ready not only to bear with them without impatience, but to give them all possible assistance. Ever disposed to make the best of all, easy, cheerful, and even playful in familiar intercourse, and on suitable occasions; since, far from being a restraint upon the freedom of society, it is indeed the only way of throwing aside all restraint, without introducing any bad consequences by doing so.

It needs no artifice or disguise; it pursues no sinister aims, no selfish views; but seeks

the real good of all, endeavours to express what it feels, and to appear such as it truly is.

How pleasing were general society, if such a disposition prevailed! How delightful all family intercourse, if it were never laid aside! Even friendship itself cannot be completely happy without it:—even real affection will not always supply its place. It is an universal charm, which embellishes every pleasure in social life, prevents numberless uneasinesses and disgusts which so often disturb its peace, and softens those which it cannot entirely prevent. It adds lustre to every good and valuable quality, and in some degree will atone for many faults, and prevent their bad effects.

But it may be asked, how is this quality to be attained? And it must indeed be
owned

owned, that to possess it in its utmost perfection, requires a very superior degree both of delicacy and good sense, with which all are not endued. But this should never discourage any from the endeavour; for all may improve their talents, if they will exert them, and by aiming at perfection, may make continual advances towards it. Every good quality is best understood by endeavouring to practise it.

Let us consider what conduct the sentiments described would dictate on every different occasion; let us endeavour to form to ourselves the best notion of it we are able, and then watch for opportunities to put it in practice.

Such an attention will discover many which were overlooked before; it will shew

us where we have been wanting, and to what cause it hath been owing; and point out to us those qualities in which we are deficient, and which we ought to endeavour to cultivate with the greatest care. Our sphere of action will be enlarged, and many things, too generally considered as matters of indifference, will become objects of attention, and afford means of improving ourselves, and benefiting others. Nothing will be neglected as trifling, if it can do this even in the smallest degree, since in that view even trifles become valuable. Our ideas of excellence will be raised by continually aiming at it, and the heart improved by the thoughts of being thus employed.

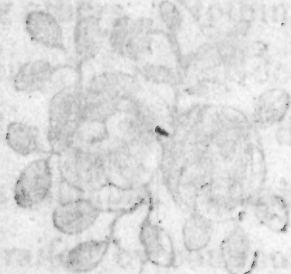
Above all, let us subdue those passions which so often oppose what reason approves, and what would afford the truest pleasures

to

to the heart; and let us fix all that is good and amiable on the only sure and immoveable foundation—the precepts of that Religion which alone can teach us constant, universal, and disinterested benevolence.



to the heart; and let us fix all that is good
and amiable on the only sure and unmovable
foundation—the precepts of that Religion
which alone can teach us constant, universal,
and distinguished benevolence.



Above all, let us have that steady
and unshaken faith which is the basis of
all virtue.



ON THE

CHARACTER of CURIO.

“**T**IS his way,” said ALCANDER, as CURIO went out of the room: “indeed, my friend, you must not mind it, he is an honest fellow as ever lived.”

‘It may be so,’ replied HILARIO, ‘but really his honesty is nothing to me; and had he picked my pocket, and conversed with good-humour, I should have spent a much more agreeable evening. He has done nothing but vent his spleen against the world,
‘and

‘ and contradict every thing that was said;
‘ and you would have me bear with all this,
‘ because he does not deserve to be hanged!’

“ Indeed,” said ALCANDER, “ you do not
“ know him; with all his roughness, he has a
“ worthy, benevolent heart,—his family and
“ friends must bear with the little peculiari-
“ ties of his temper, for in essential things he
“ is always ready to do them service, and I
“ will venture to say, he would bestow his
“ last shilling to assist them in distress. I
“ remember, a few weeks ago, I met him on
“ the road in a violent rage with his servant,
“ because he had neglected some trifle he
“ expected him to have done; nothing he
“ did could please him afterwards, and the
“ poor fellow’s patience was almost exhausted,
“ so that he was very near giving him warn-
“ ing. Soon after, the servant’s horse threw
him,

“ him, and he was very dangerously hurt.

“ CURIO immediately ran to him, carried

“ him home in his arms, sent for the best

“ assistance, and attended him constantly

“ himself, to see that he wanted for nothing;

“ he paid the whole expence; and as he has

“ never recovered so far as to be able to do

“ his work as he did before, CURIO has taken

“ care to spare him upon every occasion, and

“ has increased his wages, that he may be able

“ to afford the little indulgencies he wants.”

“ How lucky it was,” replied HILARIO,

“ that the poor fellow happened to meet with

“ this terrible accident, for otherwise he would

“ never have known that he had a good

“ master, but might have gone to his grave

“ with the opinion that he was an ill-natured

“ churl, who cared for nobody but himself.

“ The other day I met one of his nephews,

“ who

‘who had just been at dinner with him;
‘the young fellow was come to town from
‘Cambridge for a few days, and had been to
‘visit his uncle, but happening unfortunately
‘to be dressed for an assembly, the old gentle-
‘man was displeased with his appearance,
‘and began railing at the vices and follies of
‘the age, as if his nephew had been deeply
‘engaged in them, though I believe no one
‘is less inclined to them; but every thing he
‘did or said, was wrong through the whole
‘day, and, as he has really a respect for his
‘uncle, he came away quite dejected and
‘mortified at his treatment of him.’

“And a few days after,” replied ALEANDER, “when that nephew called to take leave
“of him, he slipped a bank-note of one hundred
“pounds into his hands at parting, to pay
“the expences of his journey, and ran out
“of

“ of the room to avoid receiving his thanks
“ for it.”

‘ So then,’ returned HILARIO, ‘ if the
‘ young man is of a fordid disposition, and
‘ thinks money a better thing than friend-
‘ ship, good-humour, and all the amiable
‘ qualities which render life agreeable, he has
‘ reason to be perfectly satisfied with his
‘ uncle; if he is not, the old gentleman has
‘ done his part to make him so, by shewing
‘ him, that, according to his notions, kind-
‘ ness consists in giving money. For my
‘ part, if ever I should be a beggar, or
‘ break my bones, I may perhaps be glad to
‘ meet with your friend again; but as I hope
‘ neither of those things are ever likely to
‘ happen to me, I am by no means ambi-
‘ tious of the honour of his acquaintance:—
‘ his good qualities are nothing to me, and
‘ his

‘his bad ones are a plague to all who come
‘in his way.’

“One may bear with them,” replied AL-
CANDER, “where there is so much real worth:
“the whole world could not bribe that man
“to do a base action.”

“So much the better for him,” returned
HILARIO; ‘but really, as I said before, it
‘is nothing to me; and after all, whatever
‘excuses your good-nature may find for
‘him, there must be something wrong in
‘the heart, where the manners are so un-
‘pleasant.’

“He has not a good temper,” said AL-
CANDER, “and every man has not the same
“command over himself; but indeed he
“has a good heart; and if you knew him

“as

“well as I do, you must love him with all
“his oddities.”

‘His oddities are quite enough for me,’
returned HILARIO, ‘and I desire to know
‘no more of him; he might make me *esteem*
‘him, but he could never make me *love* him;
‘and it is very unpleasant to feel one of these,
‘where one cannot feel the other.’

ALEXANDER could not but be sensible of the
truth of many of HILARIO’s observations;—
he sighed in secret for the friend whose good
qualities he valued, and whose foibles gave
him pain; and could CURIO have known
what his friend felt for him at that moment,
it might perhaps have gone farther than all
he ever read or thought upon the subject,
towards correcting a fault for which he often
blamed himself, but which he still continued

to

to indulge, and to imagine himself unable to subdue.

Perhaps neither of the parties concerned in this dispute were well qualified to judge as to the subject of it. Esteem and regard influenced the one, and added strength to his good-nature; while the other, whose patience was wearied out by the ill-humours of a stranger, of whose merits he was ignorant, was naturally disposed to view them in an unfavourable light. But such a conversation must induce every indifferent person to reflect on the importance of a quality which could oblige a friend to blush for the person he esteemed, and make an enemy at first sight of one by no means wanting in good-nature, who came into company with a disposition to please and to be pleased, and whose disgust was occasioned by a disappointment in that aim.

Can

Can such a quality be a matter of little consequence, which those who are punctual in their duty in more essential points may be permitted to neglect? Can it be a disposition so strongly implanted in the heart of any man, that his utmost efforts cannot conquer it?—The first supposition might furnish an excuse for giving way to any fault, since all may fancy they have virtues to counterbalance it. The last would reduce us almost to mere machines, and discourage every effort to reform and improve the heart, without which no real and solid virtue can be attained.



Can such a quality be a matter of little
consequence, which those who are principal
in their duty in more essential points may be
permitted to neglect? Can it be a disposition
to strongly implanted in the heart of any man,
that his utmost efforts cannot conduct it?
The stiff supposition might furnish an excuse
for giving way to any fault, since all may fancy
they have virtues to counterbalance it. The
last would reduce us almost to mere machines,
and discourage every effort to reform and im-
prove the heart, without which no real and
solid virtue can be attained.





is. But this can only extend to a certain de-
gree. Afflictions may come to such a height

F O R T I T U D E

TRUE Fortitude is a strength of mind,
which cannot be overcome by any trials
or any sufferings. It consists not in being
insensible of them, for there is no real for-
titude in bearing what we do not feel; but it
renders us superior to them, and enables us
to act as we ought to do in every different
situation in life, in every change that can
affect our outward circumstances, or our in-
ward feelings.

There is a kind of fortitude which pro-
ceeds from natural constitution; some are

less affected by trials than others; and some, from strong health and spirits, are able to go through a great deal without sinking under it. But this can only extend to a certain degree. Afflictions may come to such a height, that the most insensible must feel them; and then their apparent fortitude is overcome, and the strongest health and spirits can only resist a little longer than the weakest,—they must give way to a sufficient force, and therefore can never be the source of true and constant fortitude.

There is also a kind of fortitude which is called forth to action on particular occasions, and for a time appears superior to the trial; and this may sometimes be inspired even by motives which are in themselves highly blameable. A point in view, which is eagerly pursued, will enable a person to go through
what

what at other times might appear insupportable; but this can only last while the motive remains in force; and those who by this have been rendered equal to what appear to be the greatest trials, have often at other times sunk under the smallest. True fortitude must spring from some principle which is constant and unchangeable, and can support it at all times, and against every attack.

It cannot therefore be derived from any thing in this world. Natural strength must yield to pain and sorrow;—earthly considerations can support us no farther than their immediate influence extends;—pride cannot enable us to bear humiliations, or even those little mortifications which daily occur, when there is no credit to be gained by doing so;—and philosophy must at last be reduced to nothing more than suppressing complaints,

and making the best of what it cannot cure. These may inspire a strength which will last for a time—a strength which may serve for certain occasions, but will fail on others,—or an appearance of strength to conceal our weakness. But none of these can inspire that fortitude which is a constant invariable disposition of mind, prepared for every trial, and superior to them all. This can only be derived from a confidence in that assistance which can never fail; from a motive for action which is sufficient to carry us through every trial; and from hopes which nothing in this world can take away.

The effect of this fortitude is, that it makes us steadily and constantly pursue the great aim we have in view; it is drawn aside by no pleasure; it shrinks at no difficulty; it sinks under no affliction; but resolutely goes on,
whatever

whatever may be the path assigned, and, though it may suffer, it never yields.

This virtue is exercised, not only in the greatest afflictions, but in the daily occurrences of life; and if in these its trials are not so painful, yet they may perhaps often be more difficult. It enables us to bear the faults and weaknesses of others, the disappointments and humiliations which all must meet with, and the numberless little vexations and inconveniencies, which though when considered separately they may appear trifling, yet often affect the temper much more than we are generally aware of.

It is also exercised by our own weaknesses and imperfections; for there is no person living who can always preserve the same equal state of mind and spirits; and it is no

inconsiderable part of true fortitude, to avoid giving way to what none can avoid feeling; and to persevere in acting as we ought in every different disposition of mind.

This then is the great and distinguishing character of true fortitude;—That it is constant and invariable, the same at all times, in all trials, and in all dispositions; it depends not on the circumstances in which we may be placed, nor on the strength either of body or spirits which we may enjoy; but it enables us to exert all the strength we possess, (which is often much more than we are apt to imagine) it is seated in the will, and never gives way in any instance.

Without this virtue, there can be no dependance on any other. Those who have the best inclinations in the world, must find a
time

time of difficulty,—a time when from the opposition they may meet with, or from their own weakness, the performance of their duty must require no small degree of exertion; and if they have not fortitude to go on, in spite of all such difficulties, their former good dispositions and good actions will be of little use.

The practice of virtue is indeed often attended with applause sufficient to animate vanity to assume the appearance of it; and even where it is pure and genuine, the esteem and affection engaged by it, cannot but be highly pleasing to all, and must afford some degree of assistance and support. But there are many instances in which all these supports are entirely wanting; and true fortitude will enable us to act as we ought to do, without any such assistance, and even when we are sure
that

that the consequence of doing so will be directly contrary to all this.

It can bear not only the want of approbation, but the mortification of being slighted or blamed, and persevere, whatever may be the consequence in regard to this world; not from a contempt for the opinions of others, for it does not hinder such humiliations from being felt, but it supports them with courage and resolution, and will never endeavour to avoid them by the slightest deviation from the right path, or to return them by a display of its superiority, or by giving any degree of pain or humiliation to those from whom they came. Far from being a stern or rugged quality, it is indispensably necessary to support that gentleness and sweetness of disposition, which form the charm of social life, and which can never be long preserved by those

those who have not fortitude to bear the vexations they must often meet with from the weakneſſes and inadvertencies, and even from the pride and ill-temper, of thoſe with whom they conſeſe; that *ſpirit*, (as it is commonly called) which immediately reſents every trifling injury, and endeavours to return it, is in fact a weakneſs,—a proof of not being able to bear them. True fortitude can conquer it; and without this, no apparent gentleneſs of character can ever be depended on, ſince it will only laſt till there is ſufficient provocation to get the better of it.

To the want of this kind of fortitude, much of the unhappineſs of ſociety is owing. A triſle gives offence, and is reſented; we cannot bear a little mortification, or humiliation; or, perhaps, we cannot bear to appear to want ſpirit to reſent ſuch things, and
do

do ourselves justice. True fortitude can bear it all, whenever it is our duty to do so; and few consider the importance of exerting it on such occasions.

It enables us to acknowledge our errors and our faults, instead of having recourse to any artifice or misrepresentation to disguise or justify what the heart in secret disapproves, or must disapprove, on a fair and impartial consideration; to which, want of fortitude to bear the mortifying view of our own imperfections, is often one of the greatest hindrances.

In great afflictions, fortitude is exerted not only in suppressing complaints and murmurs, but in rendering us superior to them, by enabling us to take an enlarged view of things; to consider the hand from which they come,
and

and the advantages which may be derived from them; and it inspires not merely a tame submission, but an active resolution, which in every trial exerts its utmost powers, and excites us to do the best we can, whatever that may be, and whatever struggle such exertion may cost us.

In short, it enables us to make the best of every thing, to pursue steadily and constantly the path of duty, unmoved by all the attacks of pleasure or of pain, and unwearied by the most tedious and apparently unsuccessful exertions.

In order to obtain this fortitude, we cannot but be sensible, that a strength superior to our own is necessary: the experience of every day must shew us our weakness, and the insufficiency of those supports which any thing

in this world can afford us. But the Word of Eternal Truth has promised us a help, which shall never fail those who sincerely seek for it: for this then we must apply by constant prayer, not only in general, but in every particular instance. But we must not suppose that this help can be obtained without exerting our own endeavours; we must do our best, that we may hope to be assisted; and in so doing, we may securely depend upon it, in every trial that can come upon us.

Too great a confidence in our own strength is, indeed, directly contrary to true fortitude, and generally leads to a defeat; but we should also be cautious that we do not run into another extreme, and give way to such a degree of diffidence as may hinder us from exerting ourselves, or give the name of diffidence to real indolence.

The

The consciousness of our own weakness should, indeed, induce us to seek a more powerful assistance, but our endeavours are necessary in order to obtain it; and neither the presumptuous, nor the indolent, have any right to hope for it.

Let us then exert ourselves on every occasion, and never give way in the smallest instance, if we mean to be steady in the greatest. Let us endeavour to impress upon our minds the importance of the objects we have in view—the favour of God, and our own eternal happiness; we shall then have a motive for action continually before us, sufficient to support us in the greatest difficulties, to arm us against the severest shocks of affliction, and enable us to endure the longest course of sufferings to which human life is liable.

Is it possible we should sink under the humiliation we may meet with from this world, while we may hope for the approbation of God himself? Can we not suffer a transitory affliction, with the prospect of endless felicity before us?—It is for want of attending sufficiently to these things, that present trials appear to us so insupportable; and the only effectual preparation for these trials is, to arm ourselves with comforts which they cannot take away, and motives for action which may be sufficient to carry us through them with resolution and vigour.

When we look into the Holy Scriptures, we find the Christian life continually represented as a state of warfare, in which we are called to contend with the temptations of this world, and with our own perverse inclinations. We must deny ourselves, and take up
the

the cross, if we would be the disciples of Christ;—we must conquer, if we would obtain the crown;—we must lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that is set before us;—we must endure unto the end, if we hope to be saved.

Such is the account given us of the state to which we are called, and such a prospect must strongly impress upon our minds the necessity of arming ourselves with true fortitude;—of being steadfast, immoveable, while we have the most powerful and comfortable motives to induce us to be so;—forasmuch as we *know* that our “labour is not in vain in the Lord.” We know that we shall conquer, if we faint not; that if we are faithful unto death, He will give us a crown of life—a happiness beyond what the eye hath seen, or the ear heard, or the heart of man is able to conceive.

Such

Such a view of the Christian state must shew us, in a strong light, the nature of that fortitude that is required, in order to enable us to perform our part in it. Human motives may inspire occasional exertions which excite admiration; but those instances of fortitude which are most admired, are seldom, in reality, such as are most difficult; and the true Christian must be armed with a fortitude far superior to that which is displayed on such occasions; a fortitude which requires no earthly support; which aims at no present reward; which resists pleasure and pain, humiliation and weariness; which is the same at all times, and can always obtain the most difficult of all conquests—that which is gained over our own inclinations.

The person who sacrifices pleasure to ambition, convenience to avarice, or any present indulgence

indulgence to pride, or some other predominant passion, may appear to act with fortitude in many instances, when, in fact, his conduct is directly contrary to it; since he only gives way to a darling inclination, and pursues the means of gratifying it; and should a trial come which required the sacrifice of that inclination, his imaginary fortitude must fail.

But the fortitude of the true Christian is prepared for every thing; like all his other virtues, it is not the occasional exertion of a moment, but the constant disposition of his mind. It is also, like all other virtues, never perfectly known, but by endeavouring to practise it. All are sensible that it is necessary in pain and afflictions: few consider sufficiently how often it is necessary even in the most ordinary occurrences—the most trifling conversations.

How often are the real sentiments disguised, the innocent injured, and false maxims suffered to gain ground, merely for want of resolution to resist the torrent, from a fear of being singular, or of losing any share in the good opinion of others by opposing their sentiments! And thus the cause of truth and goodness is betrayed, and often suffers as much from timid friends as from real enemies; for conversation will influence the character and conduct: by degrees the mind grows familiar with what once it disapproved, and learns to believe what has been frequently repeated, and suffered to pass unnoticed, till that delicacy, which was shocked at the least appearance of any thing wrong, is insensibly worn away.

Wrong opinions mislead the practice, and uncharitable ones corrupt the heart; but those exertions with true fortitude inspires, should

at

at the same time be carefully distinguished from that positiveness and love for contradiction which so often disturb the peace and pleasure of society, and which (even when they happen to be exerted in a good cause) frequently do a real injury to what they mean to defend.

The person who feels pain in opposing the opinions and inclinations of others, and does it merely from a sense of duty, will always endeavour to avoid giving pain by doing so; but a gentleness and timidity of disposition, and an earnest desire to please, are qualities which may lead to excesses, as well as the contrary; and true fortitude requires the sacrifice of our inclinations, whenever our duty makes it necessary.

But it is impossible to enumerate the various instances in which fortitude is necessary in the daily occurrences of life. A careful at-

tention to our own conduct, and a candid enquiry into the motives of it, will be the surest means to point out to us wherein we are wanting, and to give us a just notion of that fortitude which is necessary to support us on every different occasion.

Let us then often examine our own hearts, and enquire, whether the fear of displeasing others does not sometimes induce us to disguise our real sentiments, and appear to approve what in our hearts we condemn?—Whether we are not sometimes positive, because we cannot bear to own ourselves in the wrong; or complying, because we dread being thought so?—Whether we do not sometimes give a sanction to uncertain suspicions, or ill-natured ridicule, from a fear of being thought to possess less penetration than others, or from the apprehension of exposing ourselves

selves to the like, if we should venture to oppose them?—In short, whether we are never induced by fear, either to speak, or to be silent, when our own unprejudiced judgment would have led us to do otherwise? If so, we are, in that instance, wanting in true fortitude; nor is the want of it less evident in giving way to our own faults and weaknesses, than to those of others.

Can we subdue our pride, anger, fretfulness, &c.—all those passions which are so often excited by trifles in common life, and which, on such occasions, are in general too easily suffered to take their course without resistance? Do we not rather sometimes give way to them, for want of resolution to endeavour to suppress them; or from a fear of being despised for our insensibility, or our tameness, if we should suffer any injury to pass

unno-

unnoticed? Can we bear the various kinds of mortifications we may meet with from others, without endeavouring to return them; and submit even to unjust censure, when charity or any other duty requires our doing so? Can we sacrifice our inclinations to those of others, with cheerfulness and good-humour, without telling the world that we are doing so, and endeavouring to exalt ourselves at the expence of those we pretend to oblige, and to gain admiration to support and reward us? Can we bear the follies and weaknesses of those with whom we converse, and the many little circumstances which often render society tiresome to us, without giving pain by shewing that it is so? And do we endeavour, by every gentle and engaging method, not only to make others easy and happy, but to win them over to all that is amiable and good, and help them to amend those imperfections

fections which we cannot help observing, without exposing them to the humiliation of knowing that we are sensible of them?—

The good that may be done in this way is seldom attended to as it deserves; but such endeavours require no small degree of fortitude, since their success must, in general, be attained by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, and often remains entirely unknown; and far from being attended with any admiration, they will, for the most part, pass unnoticed,—perhaps often be totally misinterpreted.

These are but few of the numberless occasions in which true fortitude is necessary in common life. A little attention to the circumstances which daily occur, will point out to us many more, on which it may be highly useful to enquire into the motives of our conduct; and such enquiries will often
shew,

shew, that want of fortitude is in reality the source of many faults and imperfections, which are too generally overlooked, or ascribed to some other cause.

How happy then is the situation of him who is armed with that true and constant fortitude, which rests with full confidence on Almighty Power, and is supported by it in every trial;—who is thus prepared for all events, and able not only to *suffer*, but to *act*, as he ought to do in every different situation;—who can bear with the same resolution those severe shocks which at once destroy his earthly happiness, and those little mortifications which continually allay it;—who never can be deterred from the path of duty, either by the allurements of pleasure, the dread of sufferings, or the weariness and disgust which attend on long-continued trials, and

and the discouragement of repeated disappointments!

The nerves may tremble at the approach of pain,—the spirits may sink beneath a load of grief,—but the resolution remains unmoved; and pain or affliction, however strongly felt, are boldly encountered, whenever they are inflicted by the dispensations of Providence, or when the consideration of duty makes it necessary voluntarily to endure them.

This alone is true Christian Fortitude;—a fortitude far superior to that which in many striking instances has engaged the admiration of mankind:—and this is necessary to all who wish to attain that perfection to which we are called.

and the discouragement of repeated disap-

pointment.

The nerves may tremble at the approach of pain—the spirits may sink beneath a load of grief—but the resolution remains unmoved; and pain or affliction, however strongly felt, are boldly encountered, whenever they are inflicted by the dispensations of Providence, or when the consideration of duty makes it necessary voluntarily to endure them.

This alone is true Christian Fortitude;—a fortitude far superior to that which in many striking instances engaged the admiration of mankind;—and this is necessary to all who wish to attain that perfection to which we are called.